

## Artist Profiles

## Page 2 - Denise Gale / February

Where is the intellectual aspect? Start with the compositions which are solid and well balanced in an odd sort of precise imprecision. In other words, Gale knows how to put a painting together in such a way that it's tight but not overly composed. Next, look at the array of colors from the obnoxiously bright to the deep blacks and earth tones. Color is no small matter for this artist and it is something she proves to be quite adept with. Look at *In Memoriam for Paul Nisson*, for example, and how the bright red in upper portion is 'woven' into the lower portions to overlap via



*See Through*, oil on canvas, 2001, 60 x 48 in

drips the crude bluish-gray square form in the foreground. The larger forms seem to be trying to cover up the several layers of color behind them. The colors find a harmonic balance even as they battle it out with each other. Finally, look at the texture and the 'slap-dash' manner in which the forms are painted. These forms are not worked out from smaller studies. Gale finds her form, indeed, everything in her painting through the act of painting. Spend some time with this work and you are left wondering how she does it. She takes the three basic components of composition, color and texture and pulls them all together in these

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*In Memoriam for Paul Nisson*, 2002, oil on canvas, 60 x 48 in



*In Memoriam for Paul Nisson*, (detail)

glorious paintings. This ability is the key to Gale's painterly genius, the incredible balancing act in which the sum completely exceeds the parts and yet remains fresh from one painting to the next.

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The subject matter for this work is painting itself, the 'flesh' of paint. These pieces are almost obscene for the carnality with which they are self-possessed and project. Another artist's work they recall is Andrew Piedilato whose painting was also reviewed and profiled here. As to content, one aspect the paintings get at is a sense of time and history. This is primarily evident in the layering upon layering of paint and color. You look at a painting like *38 Sheep Fold* and glimpse its personal history of creation: way up in the back



*Baby Sammy*, oil on canvas, 2002, 12 x 16 in

left there is a whisper of its beginnings in the thin black stripes that appears to be over-painted by a dark black form. How much did the latter originally cover the picture plane? It's teasingly unclear because (suddenly it seems) a lot of light blue was quickly slapped down obliterating most of the background. In turn, this form and some of the black was then slashed with thinner red lines that 'sink' into the blue somewhat. Now, in one glance

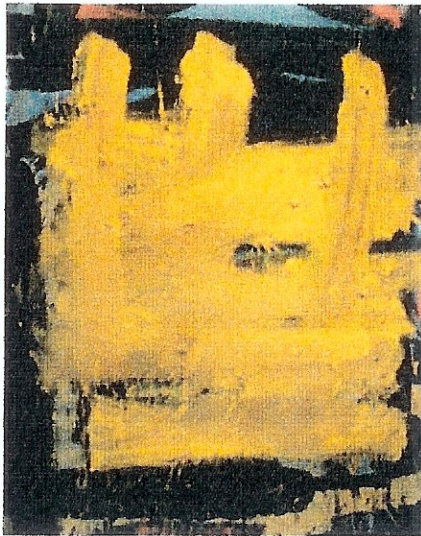


The Painting Center installation view

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*38 Sheep Fold*, oil on canvas, 2003, 36 x 36 in



*Yellow with Black Cross*, 2002, oil on canvas, 60 x 48 in

you get a look at the history of this piece and a snapshot of time with no representational narrative to distract. This is something that only abstract painting is capable of and which results in a certain type of elegance and poetic beauty.