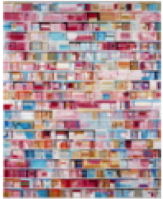


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Van Brunt Gallery

May 7, 2007 - 15:07 — Elizabeth Stevens



In his gallery in Beacon, NY, Carl Van Brunt has managed to hold his audience through sheer honesty--grooming a stable of mid-career, young, and emerging artists, some self-taught--and his approach keeps you coming back for more.

As you entered the space in April, you were surrounded by Stanford Kay's paintings (left). Kay seems to have shifted to a more lyrical, painterly approach with a subject he has been "in series" with for some time: books. It is not hard to reference Rauschenberg's quarter-mile installation with his hand-selected history and book stacks. This is a broad subject to work with and I like the fact that Kay approaches it with a painter's hand, and that, in an online, mp3, fast food world, he has managed to evoke the warmth of books and paintings -- objects that you can still reach out and touch without wondering what is on the other side.

D. Dominick Lombardi's section was hung in a relatively new room in the Van Brunt space, and I was dazzled by the many different mediums that he has been working with over the past 10 years. The most appealing are his new works with tattoo imagery in the foreground of an otherwise more formal painting (right). Lombardi is doing something new with an old-fashioned vex, searching for the sublime and finding line. As Lombardi has moved over the past two years from writing full time to spend more time painting and curating at such places as the Lab Gallery at the Roger Smith Hotel, his work has changed dramatically, resulting in a clear shift in his own aesthetic perspective. Dom and I have been comrades barreling through varied projects over several years, but it is my feeling that to read what Lombardi writes (including for Culturecatch.com) and to view what art he makes are two entirely different experiences.



Stephen Niccolls is the connecting tissue (left), lending balance to the exhibition by dividing Kay's and Lombardi's spaces. Niccolls's large, vibrant abstract canvases hark back to a time when Arthur Dove and Suzy Frelinghuysen were helping to define American Art with their own brand of Fauvism. For me, though, Niccolls's gouache work on paper is what stands out most powerfully, even though each piece is a modest 11 x 8 inches. These little charms pack a punch, inciting in viewers the feeling that they have unearthed something treasured. - Elizabeth A. Stevens

The April show has closed. From May 5 through June 4, the [Van Brunt Gallery](#) features works by Grace Knowlton, Stephen Spaccarelli, and John Allen.

Elizabeth Stevens has been in Art and Antiques for 30 years, from representing her family's auction house in Cincinnati to Import Director at Hedley's New York in the early '90s to Salander O'Reilly Galleries, organizing art fairs and traveling exhibitions for more than 12 years. She then was director of Yellow Bird Gallery in Newburgh, NY, organizing such exhibitions as Michael Steiner and Forrest Meyer. She is now the New York partner for Williams Hill & Stevens, a fine art logistics company located in Tribeca.

