

Simultaneity

Paintings by

MEGHAN BRADY

NICK LAMIA

STEVE MCCALL

GABRIEL PHIPPS

DANNIELLE TEGEDER

Essay by Joe Fyfe

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Curated by Gabriel Phipps

Essay by Joe Fyfe

Walsh Gallery

Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ, January 20 - March 14, 2014

Flecker Gallery

Suffolk County Community College, Selden, NY, September 10 - October 6, 2013

Sherman Gallery

Boston University, Boston, MA, March 21 - May 19, 2013

Grimshaw-Gudwicz Art Gallery

Bristol Community College, Fall River, MA, January 24 - February 22, 2013

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STEVE MCCALL
Gentle Morning, oil on canvas, 24" x 22", 2008 (cover)

Simultaneity: Curatorial Statement

The artists in this exhibit collectively define simultaneity as a viewing experience rich in associations and visual phenomena – a pool of conflicting sources and viewpoints that only make sense together in a fictional world. Peculiar and often tense combinations include subjects seen from multiple perspectives; forms that function as windows; objects whose scale vacillates between human-size and the infinite; paint that describes pictorial space while asserting itself in literal space; forms that are at once synthetic and organic, solid and ephemeral, static and kinetic.

The artists herein approach the pictorial notion of simultaneous experience by way of shared and individual roads. Each painter owes a certain debt to cubism and builds on that institution. Emphasizing paint's materiality, Dannielle Tegeder creates illusionistic images that highlight artifice. Drawing on Pop and Modernist traditions, Steve McCall manipulates scale with forms that are both figurative and landscape-based. Through the use of intuitive and intellectual processes, Nick Lamia constructs what appear to be naturally occurring machines. Meghan Brady employs flat, volumetric forms to create images that are landscapes and pure abstraction. I make solid, freestanding structures that verge on collapse, while referencing pink flesh, metal shards and glowing television screens with those same tenuous structures.

Gabriel Phipps, Curator and Artist



Grimshaw-Gudwicz Art Gallery
Photo by Rathary Kranh

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The painter Brice Marden once defined the painting as a rectangle of intense activity. This might be a good starting place from which to examine this group of works by younger painters under the general rubric, “simultaneity”. Marden might also agree that the simultaneous is clearly a property of painting: a site where opposites collide, resolve, are orchestrated, mix, mingle and are improvised upon.

All of the selected artists directly address the subject of abstract painting in their work. An overriding principle of simultaneity might be seen to exist in the individual work’s relationships to histories of modernist painting. In the writings of Clement Greenberg much is made of the assimilation of

the past in order that the project of making new art moves forward. This is very much in evidence here.

Modernist painting begins, according to some histories, with Baudelaire's Salon of 1845¹ In the paragraphs on Corot, Baudelaire anticipates Impressionism in his comments on the suggestive power of the painting medium itself: the value of a compelling, expressive and well placed touch is enormous and in general what is complete is not finished. Earlier in the text, Baudelaire observes Delacroix's visible brushstrokes.

This last reference is perhaps the point furthest back among the allusions to modernist painting decipherable among the works. One of the tools common amongst almost all the participants is the palette knife, which Cezanne's early paintings are also dominated by. There is the investigation of the compelling and well-placed touch as well as the indexical and reflexive intention of painting with a knife. In Cezanne it was simultaneously a mini-plane, an indicator of direction, a unit measurement

of color and then there is the impatience, the subsumed violence. Cezanne was concerned, from the beginning, with solidity—in his early work he troweled the paint on--and solidity is a concern here. It is a quality that contemporary painting continues to return to, as, surprisingly, it is still fighting the same battle that it has since the arrival of the production of Daguerre, Niépce, et al.

The artisanal connotation and illusionistic fragmentation afforded by the palette-knifed mark dominates Meghan Brady's



Nick Lamia, *Untitled*, oil on canvas, 35" x 35", 2007

1 Charles Baudelaire, *Art in Paris 1845 - 1862* page 13

work, with its viscerally applied colored squares and triangles. It is an element amongst the affirmative surfaces of Steve McCall; it is utilized in the scraped undercurrents of ground in Nick Lamia's work; Gabriel Phipps approximates its look in the close tones and jagged edges within the interiors of his block-like shapes (though it is perhaps closer to a spatula than a knife) and Danielle Tegeder uses the appearance of the edged swipe in her areas of collaged acrylic as counterpoint to a carefully organized and softly colored array of discretely individual geometric shapes. In this way, simultaneity of sense information arrives; that is, sight informs touch. These painted surfaces communicate to the eye through data informed by the fingers and back again.

T.J Clark, in his book on Impressionism, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers* writes about painting as scepticism, or at least unsureness, as to the nature of representation in art that begins with Manet. Clark posits the undisguised rawness of paint's materiality among the Impressionists as an exposure of the means of production: the industrial underpinnings of Nineteenth century European society and how it takes on the idea of the artist as worker. Similarly, of the many undercurrents throughout the exhibition, one that brings Marden to mind is a touch of art school intensity - a regular presence in Marden's paintings; as if the answer is in the art materials and the perspiration required in order to release their expressivity.

One hundred and fifty years later we are still attempting to come to terms with how



Meghan Brady, *Untitled*, oil on linen 16" x 16", 2009

and what may be represented in painting. (I am reminded here of James Wood's remark on Flaubert, the Modern, with all its narrow freedoms...). In Matisse's responses to Gaston Diehl, he states that once the younger artist has acquired the awareness to understand the means of expression at his disposal, he must ask of himself, 'What do I want?' and then proceed in his search from the simple to the composite in order to find the answer. This search from the simple to the composite may be at the heart of the idea of simultaneity.

In the curatorial statement for the exhibition, Gabriel Phipps describes the chosen works as a pool of conflicting sources and viewpoints that only make sense together in a fictional world. The chief fiction, to many contemporary minds, is that it is possible to make an autonomous artwork at all. The chosen works operate, to take a detached view, as if the narrative of modernism is just that, a story that has the distinct advantage of its general familiarity among painters and art cognoscenti. Their ostensible subject might be called Scenes from the Age of Internal Exploration and Transformation of the Artwork by Means of its own Specific Language.

But it would be a mistake to read any of the contributions by these five artists as ironic. Herbert Muschamp, writing on the occasion of the architectural partners Herzog and de Meuron receiving the Pritzker prize, observed that they are modern architects whose work extends and transforms the deepest strains in the Western historical tradition. Americans might regard this as a contradiction. They are accustomed to thinking of modernism as a discrete historical chapter, a 20th-century period style to be revisited from time to time as a form of retro taste...these assumptions are far from universally shared.

Elsewhere in the world, architects have sustained historical continuity by building on the ideas of 20th-century designers and exploring their application with new materials and technologies as modernity itself evolves.

This statement is a reminder that modernity does evolve, and is still very much on our minds, especially when so much of its expressive means is embedded in historical forms such as architecture and painting.

Nick Lamia's composites, in their use of diagonals, dynamism and architecture of intersecting furrows and flat color planes maintain, among the worn striations of their surfaces, an echo of the idealism of Russian Suprematism, particularly El Lissitzky, and how the vectors that constitute a structural design element seem to muscularly stretch and strain the rectangle.

A similar dynamism is present in Steve McCall whose curved forms seem to complete themselves beyond the rectangle's boundaries. McCall borrows a beat from Al Held, insisting, like Held, on a divided-up colored wall of paint. McCall carpenters a more childlike, round-edged composition in contrast to Held, and also miniaturizes it, nodding towards the non-scale that is the contemporary reality of virtual space.

When Phipps makes reference to the fictional in his curatorial essay, it may be in reference to late Guston, who is a touchstone to those who would return imagery, complexity and storytelling, symbolism and drama to the



Danielle Tegeger, *Transmission System with Chroma Construction*, collaged acrylic paint and ink on panel, 24" x 18", 2011



Grimshaw-Gudwicz Art Gallery
Paintings by Nick Lamia
Photo by Rathary Kranh

rectangle while still engaging in the challenge of serious painting. Though ostensibly abstract, one detects a proscenium, similar to Picasso's cubist still-lives. The solid backgrounds set off the blocky, chafed foreground assemblage of rectangles. The Gustonish, theatre-of-the-absurd dramatics come from the textures of the individual units, which confront the viewer as if we were looking at the scarred blocks of a high wall or the squared-off bottoms of so many upturned shoes.

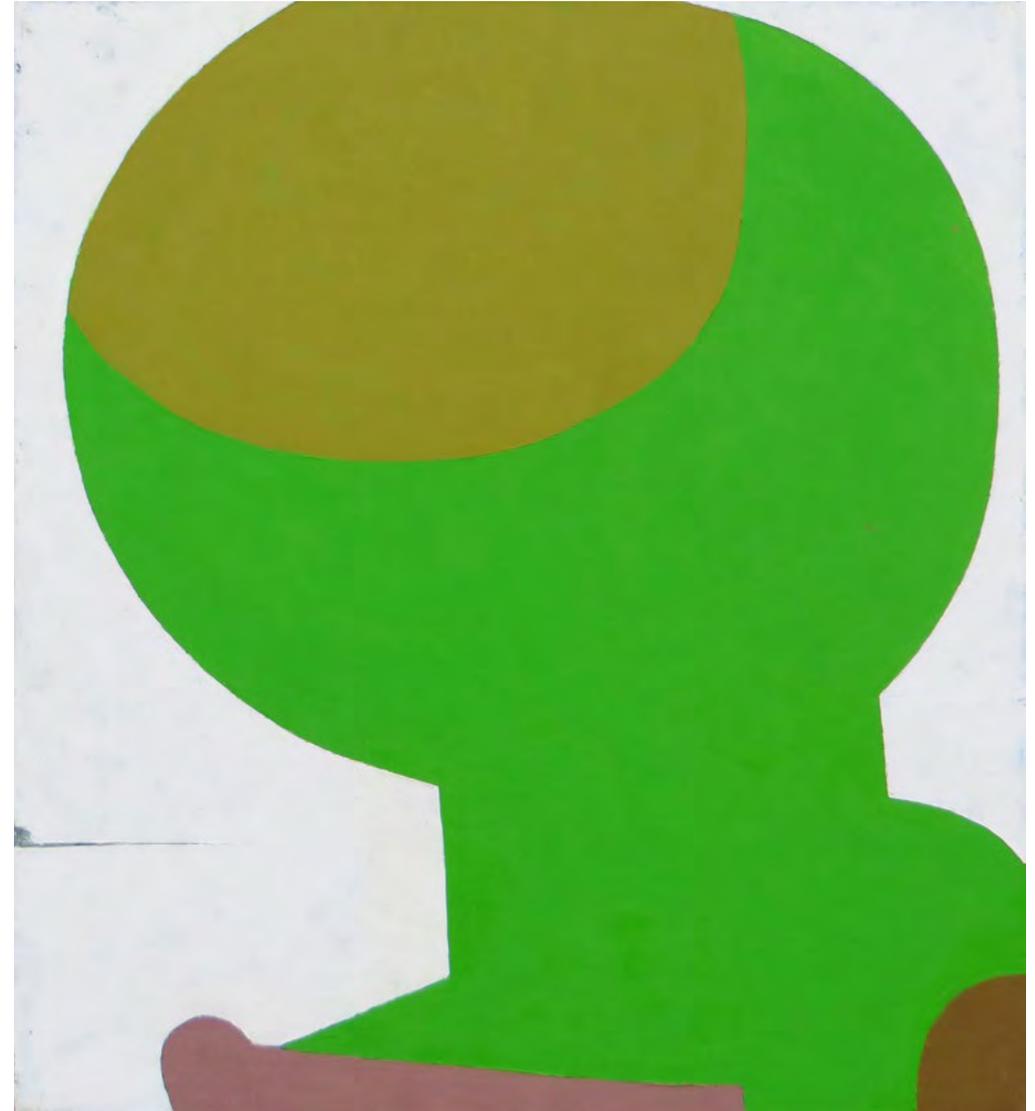
Meghan Brady appears invested in certain aspects of research surrounding the School of Paris, particularly Sonia Delauney and Tachiste artists such as Serge Poliakoff. As anachronistic as these choices may at first appear, the loamy surfaces declare that fertile ground has been reached. Brady's commingling of the heraldic with elements of patchwork (*tache* means patch), the intrusion of quasi-cubist diagonals and stripes, an emphasis on slight impasto buildup and the ragged edges of geometric shapes, challenge any sustained reading of the decorative.

Dannielle Tegeder also appears to be interested in the more idealist currents of twentieth century abstraction. Constructivism is in the mix, as well as the Bauhaus-centered concrete/spiritual axis that includes Kandinsky, Albers and Moholy-Nagy. As with her confreres, there is an astute involvement with the complexities of color. There is an abundance of buttery yellows, off-greys and pale turquoises, plus a linearity that seems to float among unmoored transparent planes

This concern with color felt throughout the works is often under-regarded in contemporary painting; but it is and always has been a crux of painting's simultaneity and in present company is a reminder that one of the attributes of any serious picture is its wholeness. It speaks to its history as a modulated surface. Color is a product of tonal adjustment re-applied to hue. The simultaneity I have been most intent on addressing through out this essay has much to do with the overall seriousness on display in the exhibition. This is evidenced in a willingness to take on the full complexity of painting without recourse to glibness, stylishness or nods towards "provisionality" or "casualism". Serious art, wrote Iris Murdoch, is a continuous working of meaning in the light of the discovery of some truth.



STEVE MCCALL
Muscle Beach, oil on canvas, 24" x 22", 2009



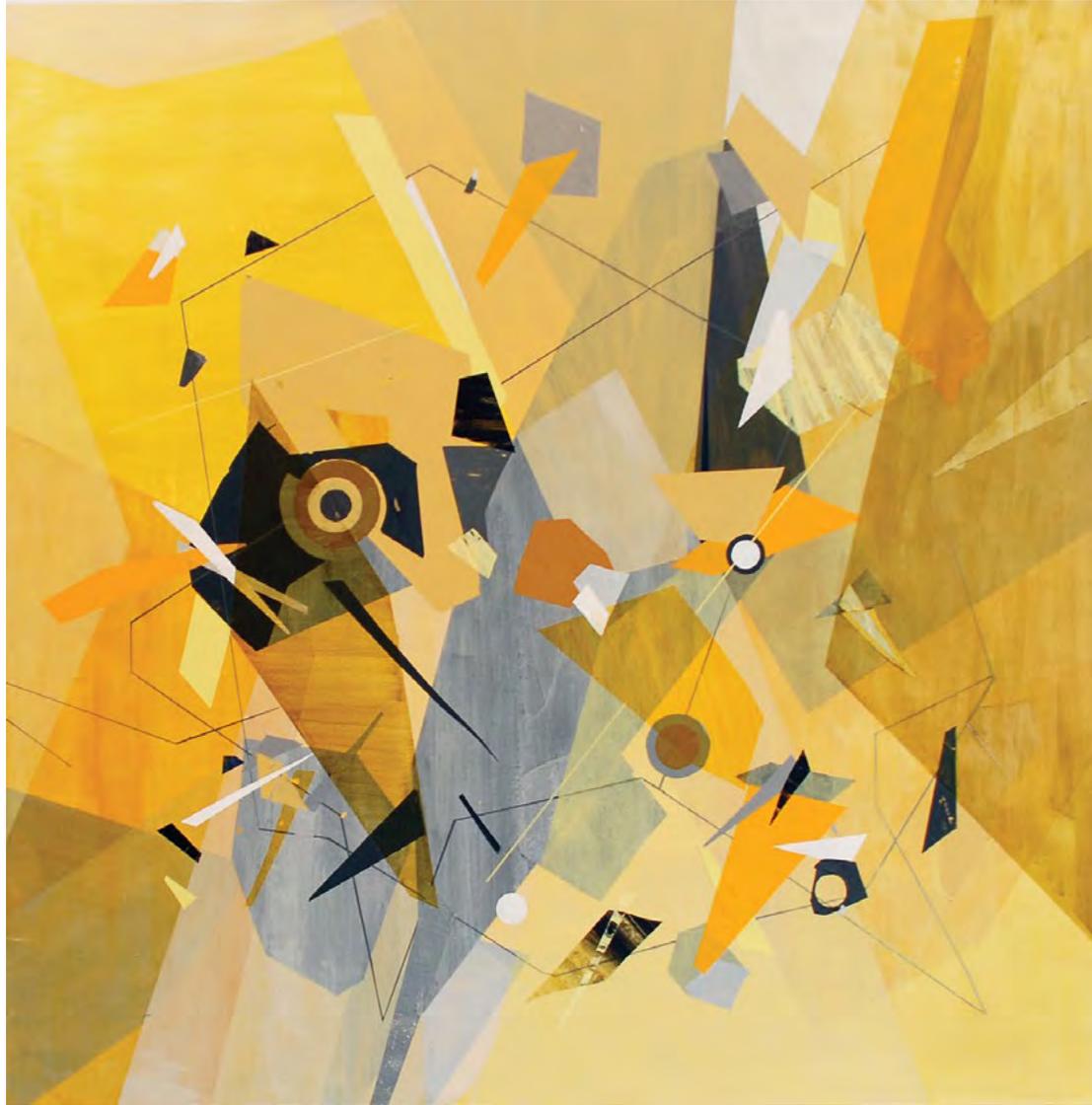
STEVE MCCALL
Hand Packed, oil on canvas, 24" x 22", 2009



MEGHAN BRADY
Untitled (Yellow), oil on canvas, 40.5" x 30", 2010



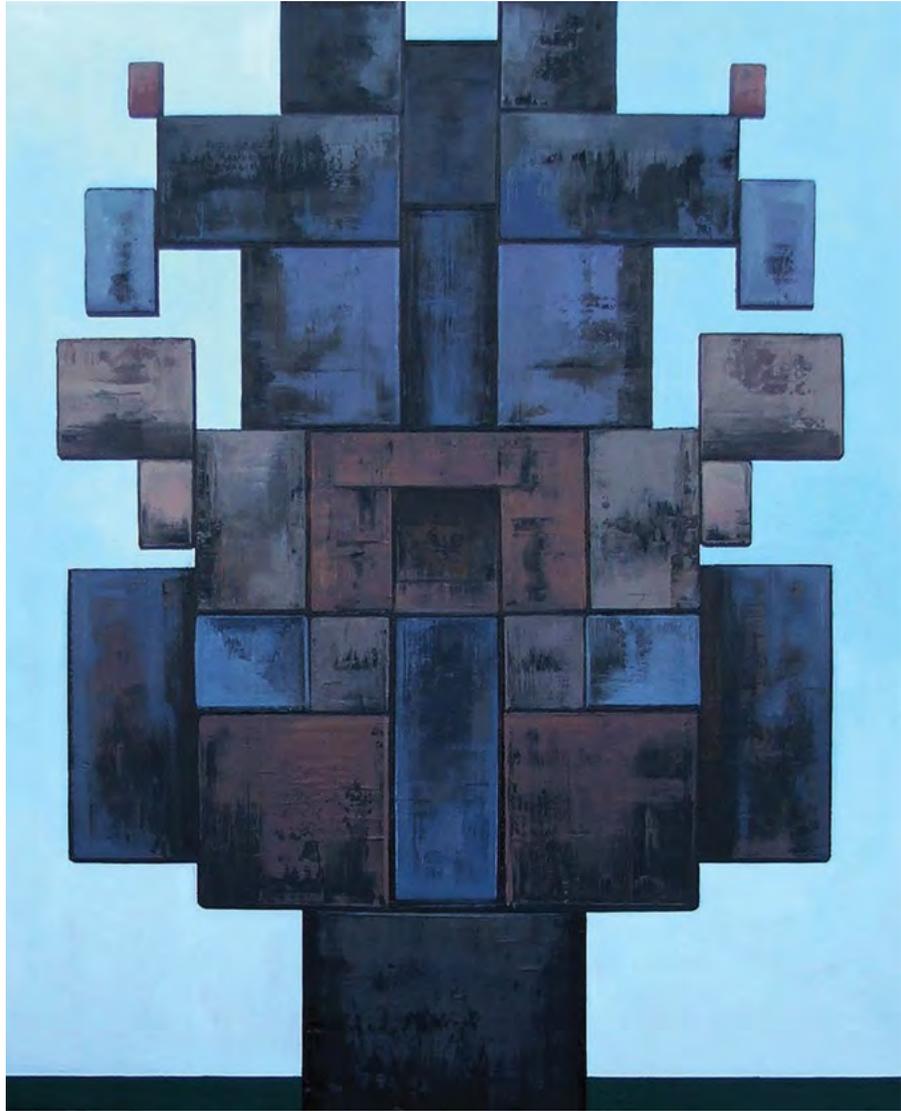
MEGHAN BRADY
NOLA, oil on linen, 40" x 30", 2010



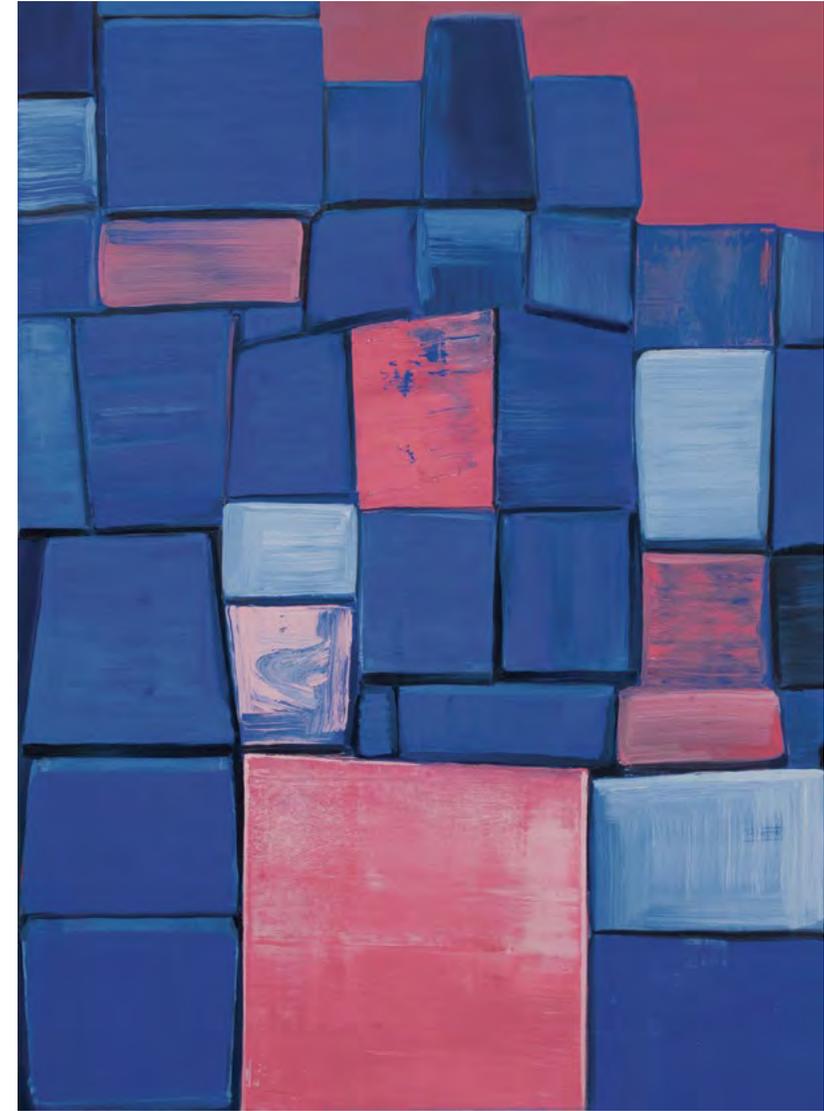
DANNIELLE TEGEDER
Yellow Midnight With Scale System, collage acrylic and ink on canvas, 2011



DANNIELLE TEGEDER
As soon as the knot was untaged by suitable analysis the problem simply vanished,
 ink and acrylic on panel, 16" x 20", 2008



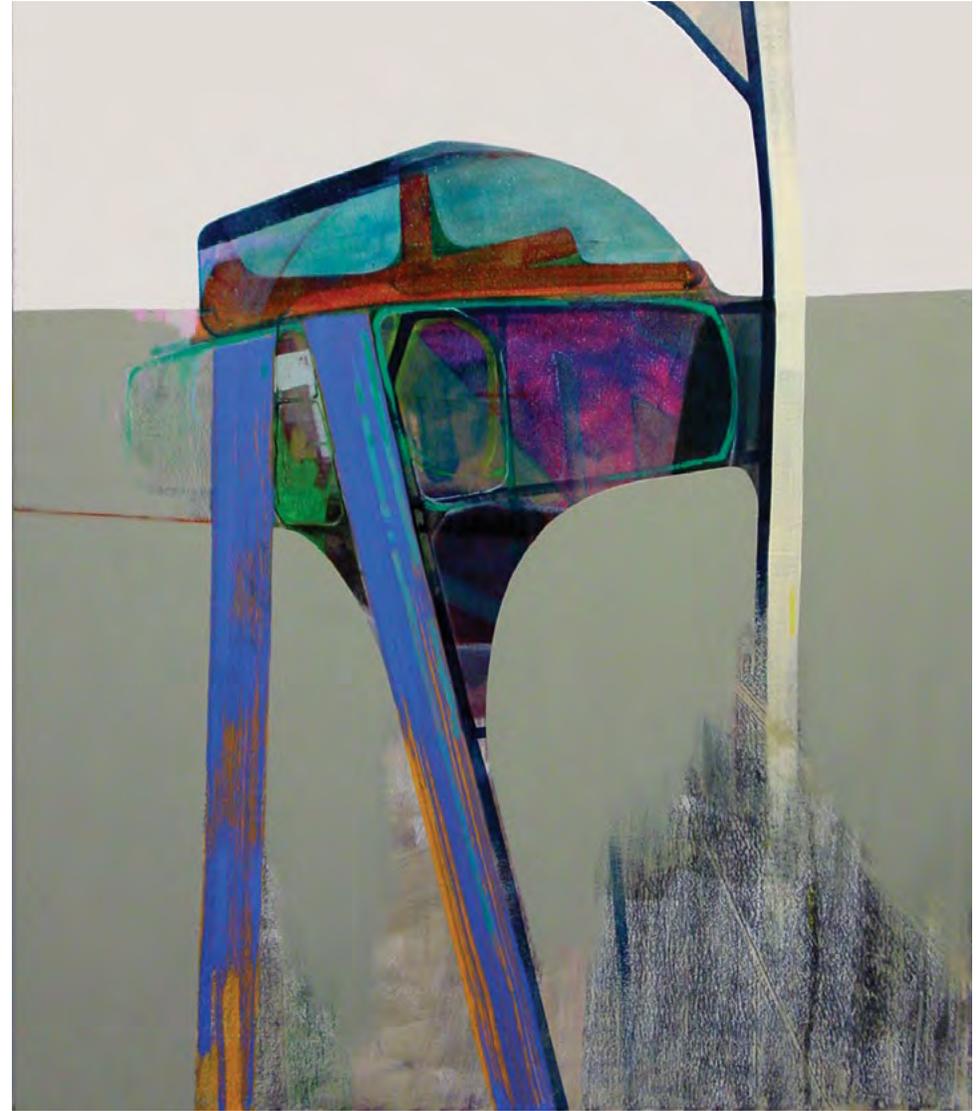
GABRIEL PHIPPS
Sway, oil on canvas, 72" x 60", 2011



GABRIEL PHIPPS
Landscape - Blue II, oil on canvas, 48" x 36", 2007



NICK LAMIA
Untitled (Waste), oil on canvas, 28" x 24", 2011



NICK LAMIA
Untitled, oil on canvas, 42" x 36", 2010

Artist Biographies

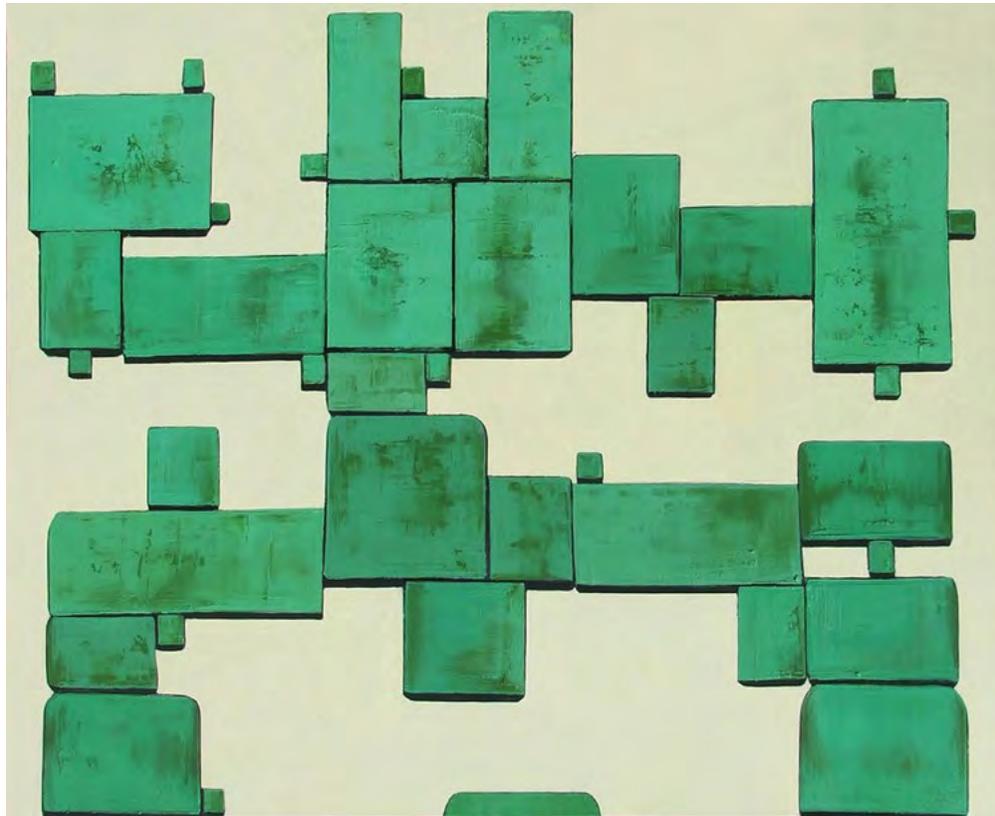
21 MEGHAN BRADY is a painter living and working in Maine. She received a B.A. from Smith College in 1998 and an M.F.A. in Painting from Boston University in 2002. Brady has shown extensively, most recently at Steven Harvey Fine Art Projects and Coleman Burke Gallery in New York City. She's received several awards, including a fellowship from the Robert Motherwell Foundation and the Maine Arts Commission.

NICK LAMIA is a Manhattan-based artist whose work includes drawing, painting, printmaking, installation and sculpture. He is the recipient of a Guggenheim fellowship as well as residencies at Wave Hill, The MacDowell Colony, the Robert Blackburn Print Workshop and the Triangle Artists Association where he is now a member of the board of directors. 500 of his small scale drawings were included in the first ever Bronx Museum Biennial in 2011. Recent solo exhibitions include "Coppice" at Jason McCoy Gallery in New York and "Greenhouse," for which he created a group of site-specific wall works for the Richard Meier building at Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn.

STEVE MCCALL studied painting at the University of Iowa and at Boston University, where he received a BFA and an MFA respectively. He has held solo exhibitions at The Art Alliance of Philadelphia and at Helix Projects in Las Cruces, NM, and participated in group shows at Feature Incorporated, in New York, and at Oulous Repair Shop, in Los Angeles. His work was featured in the literature and arts journal Puerto Del Sol. Recently he was a visiting lecturer in the Graduate Program in Fine Arts at the University of Yaoundé, Cameroon. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

GABRIEL PHIPPS is an artist, curator and art educator. He received his BFA in painting from Massachusetts College of Art in 1997 and his MFA in painting from Boston University in 2000. Recent exhibits include "Tectonics" at the Howard Scott Gallery, in New York City, "Gabriel Phipps: Recent Paintings" at the John Davis Gallery, in Hudson, New York and "Reunited" at Denise Bibro Fine Art, in New York City. He is represented by the Howard Scott Gallery. He is a Visiting Professor of Painting at Indiana University Bloomington and a recent resident of the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation. Reviews of his work can be found in Art in America and City Arts: New York's Review of Culture.

DANNIELLE TEGEDER received her MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and presently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She has had solo exhibitions in the US (Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco, and New York), and internationally (including Paris and Berlin). She has also participated in numerous group exhibitions at prestigious venues, such as such as PS1/MoMA, The New Museum, The Brooklyn Museum of Art and Artist's Space. She has been the recipient of many residencies and grants, including Smack Mellon, The Pollock-Krasner Foundation, The Fulbright Scholar Grant and the Marie Walsh Sharpe Studio Fellowship. Her works have recently been acquired for the Museum of Modern Art's New York Drawings Collection.



GABRIEL PHIPPS
Catch, oil on canvas, 48" x 60", 2010

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Curated by Gabriel Phipps

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<http://academic.shu.edu/libraries/gallery>
<http://www.shu.edu>

Gallery Director: Jeanne Brasile

Essay: Joe Fyfe
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