

MARY BOONE GALLERY

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IMAGE MATTER

On 21 February 2009, the Mary Boone Gallery will open at its Chelsea location IMAGE MATTER, an exhibition curated by Klaus Kertess. The seven artists in the exhibition are CARROLL DUNHAM, RALPH HUMPHREY, ELIZABETH MURRAY, ALFONSO OSSORIO, PETER SAUL, JULIAN SCHNABEL, JOE ZUCKER.

These artists all draw upon the tenets of post World War II modernist abstraction that reigned into the 1970s – such as allover unity of markmaking and an insistent emphasis on the physicality of painting's plane – while, at the same time, refiguring that plane with images variously indebted to the suppressed subversions of the plane practiced by many a Cubist collagist, Surrealist dreamer, comic book creator, Mayan glyph maker, and more.

Alfonso Ossorio, influenced by his friends Jean Dubuffet and Jackson Pollock, moved his highly depictive religio-surreal images toward overall abstraction; and then, in 1959 started clotting his canvases with found objects ranging from artificial eyes, to shells and other detritus found on the beach, plastic extrusions and much else to create phantasmagoric abstractions he called Congregations.

Peter Saul, on the other hand, has invented a kind of allover vaporous pointillism to create his uproariously ghoulish representations of our culture's addiction to violence that look something like digitalized hallucinations.

Ralph Humphrey never renounced his abstract reflections on the architecture of the canvas plane but began, in the early 1970s to first collage cutout painted patches, then painted wooden shapes onto the illusive shimmering of his painted canvases, as though he were imbuing Rothko's rectangular mists with

the solidity of still life objects.

With a kind of a carnivalesque fanfare, Joe Zucker, in the early 1970s, soaked cotton balls in acrylic and spread them across his canvases with due respect to the rectangular architecture of the plane and quite a bit of humor.

Zucker's friend Elizabeth Murray, imbued with a similar relish for the cosmic but a more abstract bent, animated her canvases with zany geometrics looking back to such as Stuart Davis; in 1981 she began to fracture her bright geometries into individual shapes, like giant, precise brushstroke marks, that gleefully hovered on the wall like an askew puzzle in the throes of animation.

The younger Julian Schnabel, in 1979 began to cover his canvases with shattered crockery as giant surrogates for brushstrokes, complimented with paint-brushed configurations and the occasional collaged object such as deer antlers, to create a kind of super-painting.

In the early 1980s, Carroll Dunham began to draw and/or paint erotic organics that seemed to have emerged like bacterial cultures from the knotted wood grain patterns of the wood veneer he employed as hosting ground. A decade later, he employed variously sized, painted Styrofoam balls as the skin of the mutant creature that grew out of and took shape from the rectangular plane of the canvas. For Dunham, as well as for the other six artists included in Image Matter, the physicality of the medium impacted and in many cases visibly catalyzed the subject to make matter and image one.

The exhibition, at 541 West 24 Street, will run through 28 March 2009. Please contact Ron Warren at the Gallery for further assistance, or visit our website www.maryboonegallery.com .