

REVIEW

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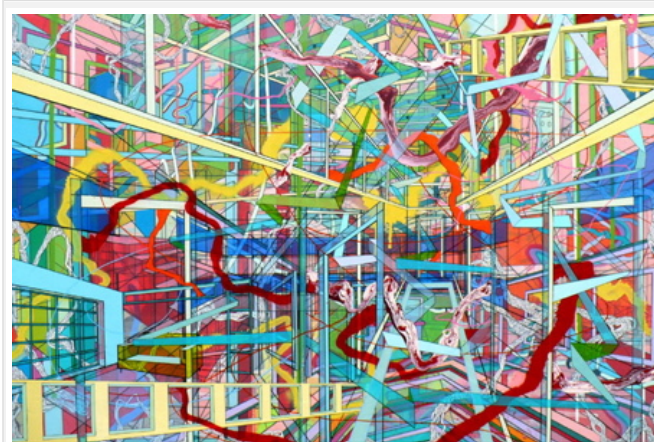
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THE ACCUMULATION OF MEMORY

Posted on October 25, 2008 by revieweditor

A review of a Kansas City artist in Chelsea



Grant Miller, Untitled (EB-22), 32" x 47", acrylic and mixed media on aluminum, 2007.
Image courtesy of gallery

Constructed Realities

[Black & White Gallery](#); Chelsea, New York City

July 17 – August 15, 2008

by Blair Schulman

As if our minds were a file cabinet bursting at the seams, the drawer labeled "retention" might be particularly protrusive. Kansas City artist Grant Miller shows us what that burden might look like. In a group exhibition this summer in a far West Chelsea gallery, Miller combines his appreciation of abstraction and architecture, depicting a highly defined sense of what these remembrances might reveal.

Much like the 1985 film *Brazil*, he fills each canvas edge to edge, from corner to corner, with sharp lines and dangerous angles; the color and movement is chaotic. He patches over each thought that we recall with another until a viewer is nearly suffocating. In addition, Miller gives these lines a near-digital exactness: as if the weight of putting this memory all together again were not enough, we have to cut ourselves and bleed for it as well. He does offer brief respites of breathing room here and there with pockets of architectural renderings reminiscent of the Neutra school, each a small corner of peace, perhaps sensing that all is not trouble and turmoil and our fragile neuroses can make too much of things.



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Grant Miller, Untitled (CF-209), 48" x 48", acrylic and mixed media on wood panel, 2007. Image courtesy of gallery

Flowing throughout these near-trigonometric jumps and points, Miller deftly includes veins or hoses that meander throughout the canvases. These veins relieve the burden to some degree, delivering a pulse and supplying oxygen that might otherwise leave you dead, or worse, bored. Reminded of a Daniel Liebeskind-process, Miller leaves his own footprint over the idea of the great architect's own visually confident structures. These veins represent information, conduits "interacting and moving through the layers of defined space," he says.

The paintings seem to begin as navigable two- and three-dimensional spaces; Miller then layers the accumulation of time by showing "how spaces, like individual moments in our lives, overlap and intersect, giving a visual depiction of reality."

This element of deconstruction allows the viewer to reinvent an imagined unpredictability, collecting and stimulating a chaos that, laid out on the table, so to speak, can be controlled to some degree. What might otherwise be a free fall, the conduits carry our past forward and in an orderly direction.

These references invoke 20th-century movements such as Modernism, Postmodernism, Cubism and Minimalism, moving us away from the "rules" of "form follows function." It is simply our own memory, Miller seems to be saying, and that these lines and veins are of our own construction as well. While the burden of this memory is of one's own device, the artist is also reminding us we are still the masters of these domains.



Grant Miller, Untitled (RPO-63), 32" x 47", acrylic and mixed media on aluminum, 2007. Image courtesy of gallery

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