

Art and Cake, February 10, 2018

Tom Krumpak

Peripheral thought, house photo word movie paint singular color

Lora Schlesinger Gallery

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By Jody Zellen



The Haiku as title — “Peripheral thought, house photo word movie paint, singular color” — of Tom Krumpak’s exhibition at Lora Schlesinger Gallery sums up the myriad sources he brings together on canvas and paper. Krumpak reduces ideas, sounds, patterns and found objects into colorful shapes and then layers to create complex and fascinating compositions. While some of the paintings like *Singing at the Edges*, *Washing in the Sea* (all of Krumpak’s paintings are undated) and *The Almanac of Love and Sunshine* reference organic shapes found in the natural landscape, others (including *Studio/House* and *Miraculous Events and Gestures*) are pure geometric abstractions. According to the press release, “no color is repeated throughout the series of artworks,” which means Krumpak mixes a new color for every small shape or line in each composition.

The *Almanac of Love and Sunshine* is large in scale and striking. Its bright yellow background is divided into a quasi-grid. Horizontally arrayed across the canvas are colorful branch-like forms in varying widths that are bisected vertically by dashed lines of similar thicknesses in different colors and lengths. Scattered within the painting are irregular, curvilinear shapes that appear to

dance across the composition, changing color as they intersect or overlap the grid. Here, Krumpak intermingles the geometric with the organic to create an intricate relationship between painted forms.

On the other hand, *Studio/House* is denser and more architectural. It is meant to reference the relationship between the house and the studio and according to Krumpak, the “experience of moving through a designed indoor/outdoor built space.” In this painting, small rectangles in soft colors are overlaid with vertical ragged-edged swiggles, like torn paper, that seems to have been carefully collaged to the surface. Again, Krumpak’s application of interlocking flat fields of color is extremely deliberate and precise.

In addition to his acrylic on canvas works, Krumpak also includes a number of paintings on paper as well as a series of scrolls (acrylic on cloth bordered rice paper). In these more delicate pieces, Krumpak plays with foreground/back ground relationships by allowing each painted design to contrast the colors and patterns of the cloth and stand out against the white of the untouched paper. In *Torque* and *Means to an End* (both acrylic paintings on paper), the criss-crossing of lines and shapes undulate across the page. While in *Torque*, Krumpak leaves a generous amount of white, in *Means to an End*, layers of crisp as well as jagged forms cover the paper. This geometry serves as the background for an array of more amorphous and playful shapes that appear to be tracings of found splotches and stains.

In this exhibition, Krumpak illustrates the power of abstraction at all scales. Both his small (8 x 10 inch) and larger (48 x 72 inch) paintings are tight, bold and intriguing investigations into the complex relationships between form and color, as well as his associated referents. Krumpak’s works have an immediate appeal yet also resonate beyond formal concerns. They beg not only to be looked at, but to be digested.

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