

**Art LTD, Jan/Feb 2016 Tomory Dodge: "The Outside Therein" at ACME. by Jody Zellen**



*Bug in the Plan*, 2015, Oil on canvas, 96" x 84"

Tomory Dodge's paintings explore the mystery of abstraction. They recall feedback loops, cities or maps of imaginary spaces created by painting over an initial grid or pattern of shapes, scraping away layers, then applying more paint, interlacing various textures and styles to become a cohesive whole. In previous series, Dodge worked from photographs and depicted wreckage and debris, but in his current works he allows the process of painting to be his subject matter. What is revealed versus what is concealed develops through numerous cycles of addition and subtraction, and is based on intuition. The new works in his exhibition "The Outside Therein" become archeological excavations where what is found buried in the layers of paint sheds light on the genesis of creation.

Working both large and small, Dodge carefully weaves gestural brush strokes into lattice-like structures filled with undulating patterns that reference familiar elements, but never cohere into anything truly recognizable. The title of a work like *Constellation* (2015), alludes to a context for interpretation, but most are more ambiguous and feel harder to place. The works are in constant dialogue with each other, metamorphosing from structured to unstructured and back again. The small pieces become excerpts in this ongoing conversation about the process of becoming and what happens along the way. Though Dodge is thoroughly invested in the analogue—the formal properties of painting—these pieces also allude to the digital. Embedded in the dark background and muted scraped ribbons of the large enigmatic painting *Bug in the Plan* (2015) are colorful grids that look like pixels, as well as RGB dot patterns that suggest representations, while stopping short of anything more discernible. Dodge's works are patchworks, collages of painted gestures that undulate across the canvases weaving through layers of time. He excels at depicting how light emerges from darkness and becomes a powerful force in the rendering of space while alluding to something not quite tangible. Paintings like *Terraformer* and *Upon a Sea of Objects* (2015) have a magical aura that transports the viewer to a dreamlike state, while the darker works, including *Urb* and *Imaginary Conversations With Others* (2015), are more grounded. In these works, the viewer becomes mired in the colors and textures of the vertical and horizontal strokes, indulging in the pleasure of this entanglement.