

DAVID AYLSWORTH

at Holly Johnson Gallery through June 29

by Todd Camplin *Friday, June 21, 2013*

Back around 2008, I remember running into a show of David Aylsworth at Holly Johnson Gallery and I was a little shocked that he was showing there. Sure the paintings referenced geometric forms, but Aylsworth was so informal with his loose brush strokes and dripping paint, whereas I was used to very clean minimalist type works from this gallery. But I was missing some key elements that make his work a great fit to Johnson's sense of aesthetics.

Aylsworth's colors often feel washed out with white, which mutes his palette, thus there is less competition between his colors. This strategy is often employed by artists schooled in minimalist approaches. His work has tightened up a bit where the lines are sharper. However, Aylsworth manages to give the surface some texture, which breaks any possibility for a hard edge. Just looking at the texture, you get a sense that you are not only looking at one painting, but rather five or six attempts, until one surfaced as a final product. Much like an AbEx artist, Aylsworth seems to be working out solutions to the paintings, right there on the canvas.

I see similarities in Aylsworth's paintings with other stable artists like David Row and Otis Jones. Like Aylsworth, these artists seem to be working out their ideas on the surface of their works. They all are minimalist, but each one is stretching the language of this mode of painting.

Off topic a bit but equally thought provoking is the trend of offbeat titles in abstract art and Aylsworth has given his paintings some real head scratching names. The piece titled A Little Trickle from the Umbilical might relate to the painting as inspiration or could just be mocking the viewer for trying to force something relatable in an abstract artwork. Whatever the reason, the heavy orange at the top and the grey on the right side of the work feel crowded out by the white. Five, Six, Seven, Eight, along with several other paintings in the show seem to be fighting the white paint for dominance.

After seeing several shows of David Aylsworth, I feel I have a greater understanding of his work and Holly Johnson's mission as a gallerist. Aylsworth will be up most the summer, through August 10th, so you have plenty of time to contemplate his paintings. However, there will be some shows in the front gallery worth your consideration as well. On Drawing: Line will open on June 29th with several artists that create obsessively drawn works, including drawings by yours truly.

<http://camplinart.blogspot.com/2013/06/david-aylsworth-at-holly-johnson-gallery.html>
http://www.moderndallas.net/david_aylsworth_holly_johnson_gallery.html