

ARTslant

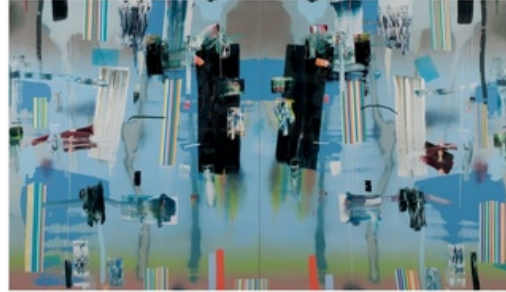
Dance and Breaks on Canvas

by Aldrin Valdez

Tomory Dodge

CRG Gallery

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Tomory Dodge's recent paintings (2010-2011) at CRG Gallery are busy with tremorous gestures that fly or hover above more streamlined bands of repeated color. They are large, squarish rectangles (the smallest one measuring 84 x 72 inches), sometimes formatted into long diptychs, that Dodge covers in vertical or horizontal stripes. This pattern is cleanly applied, bearing a similar finish to silkscreen, or heavy-handedly placed, scraped, or dragged down in streaks of mixed color. The stripes vary in texture between thin and impasto globs that retain the speed at which they seem to have been painted.

Despite the gravity and pressure of Dodge's marks, the paintings feel more open and spatial. There are segments of his canvases that are densely painted but his palette of pale rainbow breaks up the tension. Or he negates the direction of the stripes with strokes and dashes, undoing the layer beneath to show a transparent band, thus making more room.

In *Horrid Torrid Times* and *A Slight Disappearance*, there are allusions to an interior space. I like the way Dodge complicates the relationship of foreground to background; it is not easily defined in his picture plane. The stripes take on a sort of perspective that recedes into a distance without a vanishing point but also flattens on the surface. Wherever a streak or stripe creates an edge in the middle of the canvas, as in *Horrid Torrid Times*, the darkest of the bunch with its hunter greens, purples, and pinks, a floor is suggested. The scraped and looping marks allude to an inchoate figure that skulks the space but never crystallizes in the looking.

This tension created by gestural marks that suggest more figurative form and space is what makes Dodge's paintings unsettling and sensuous.

~Aldrin Valdez

