

Art in America

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Jamie Dalglish at Match Artspace

The strongest of the 12 acrylic-on-wood paintings in "Transparent Time," Jamie Dalglish's first solo show since 1997, address structure, seriality and the transcendental promise in the repetition of elemental forms. The two flanking panels of the show's punchiest painting, *Strindberg's Three Graces* (38 by 94 inches overall; 2000) are covered with the thinly layered residue of globs and splashes of streaky, partially mixed paint in strident colors, dominated by pinks and blues on the left and yellows and yellow-green on the right. Typifying the artist's gimmicky but compelling technique, these globs have been assiduously scraped down, and the resulting clamor of lumpy or bulbous shapes, graphically and chromatically turgid, is at odds with the unexpectedly slick, satiny surface. The viewer's attention is thus referred to the birch plywood support, the grain of which is readily apparent behind the sparser areas of paint and contributes its own undulating rhythms. Rivulets of lurid yellow

Jamie Dalglish
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Jamie Dalglish: *Temple Morphoglyph*, 2002, acrylic on birchwood panels, 52 panels, 96 by 104 inches overall; at Match Artspace.

green stream down through the inky ultramarine field of the central panel. The artist's insouciance in regard to craft, as in these panels' unprimed surfaces and unsanded edges, is bracing.

The encrusted vertical bands that constitute a work such as *Falling Water* (72 by 52 inches; 1994-2004), may be an exercise in perseverance, or in bull-headedness, considering that he worked on it for such a long time. *Levitating Morphoglyph* (8 feet square; 1996) hinges on the arbitrary recombination of modular elements. Twelve adjacent panels, each 8 feet tall by 8 inches wide, bear the scraped traces of poured or flung paint in lime green, pungent blue and silvery gray on a mottled, blackish ground. A system of cleats on the wall allows these daubed planks to be rearranged at will, as if to suggest a conception of form as ephemeral, fleeting. But in this case the procedure, and the lumber, are too obvious to overcome their own physicality.

The transfixingly lovely *Temple Morphoglyph* (96 by 104 inches; 2002) is assembled on the same principle, but its support, four rows of 13 24-by-8-inch panels arranged in a grid, seems to dematerialize, its limited repertoire of elements becoming a disembodied visual din. Swirling, variegated splats of near-white, overlaid with a brushy ochre wash, mimic the sheen of the metallic gold acrylics Dalglish integrates with uncommon elegance and restraint. The pervasive tan of the plywood is in sympathy

with both. Deep blue, black and glowing green blobs play off a deliberate, arcing red stroke that ripples crazily across the shimmering surface. That there are 52 panels, equal in number to cards in a deck or weeks in the year, hints at the role of chance operations in the paintings' conception, or the marking of time. *And Saffron* (24 by 16 inches; 2002) suggests that the artist might have been happy to carry on indefinitely, as it is made of two leftover panels, a little coda.

—Stephen Maine