

pretty lady

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The Consciousness Painter



'Sunset Holocaust,' Elisabeth Condon, 2009
Acrylic on canvas, 118.10 x 78.74 inches

Every now and then I meet an artist who reminds me that with all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, art can still be a meaningful occupation. When I do, I often notice that artistic mastery is a non-linear process. **Elisabeth Condon** is the real deal, and in the last couple of years her work has hit an exponential curve.

Over a year ago, I was lucky enough to visit Elisabeth's studio in Brooklyn with my critique group. I'd seen her exhibition at Lesley Heller Gallery in 2008, and **one painting in particular** had impressed me; it started to become metaphysical jazz, blurring the boundaries between space, time and consciousness. But it was hard to tell if this was an accident or not.

During her crit, it became clear that Elisabeth throws the entirety of her heart, mind and soul into her work, and she's got a lot of these things to throw. The details of her trajectory make up a respectable résumé--influences ranging from Chinese scroll paintings to Dr. Seuss; trips to China, residencies in Miami, **Spain**, Yaddo and Taiwan; figure painting intensives, architectural studies, paint pouring. If I were a real art critic, I'd feel obliged to trace these influences in sober detail.

About Me



Pretty Lady

Pretty Lady is an artist, bodyworker and health educator. She believes in the healing powers of art, meditation, good food and good company.

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But I'm not. I'm just another painter, who believes that great art transcends both biography and intellect. "The Chinese believe that paintings must have *chi*," said Elisabeth, and her paintings have tons of it. They come at you like a tidal wave, immersing you in the full experience of color, sucking you into spaces which twist and bulge and drop away, altering the fabric of your mind.



'Gaoxing, Beijing', Elisabeth Condon, 2009

Acrylic on canvas, 118.10 x 78.74 inches

The paintings she was working on when I went to her studio were a quantum leap beyond the work in her Lesley Heller show; bigger, freer, less literal and more graceful. One of them, an enormous blue poured abstraction, was half finished. In standard crit group fashion, we suggested she leave it that way. She replied, "I can't, I just can't." Elisabeth doesn't hold anything back. Art doesn't occupy a cool, political corner of her life; it IS her life. And her life is a joyous and generous one.

Since then, **things have only gotten better**. In her best work, the distinction between abstraction and representation becomes meaningless--form, space, color and architecture dance among themselves as limpidly as thought. Standing in front of one, you find yourself remembering experiences that aren't necessarily yours. Elisabeth's work communicates directly, without any need for translation.