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Eileen Mislove's "Cries and Whispers"

Citing "ghosts in my head" as diverse as Marlene Dumas, Joan Mitchell, "father memories," "Jackson Pollock on a slippery slope," and "the lingering smell of sex," Eileen Mislove makes mixed media drawings with the swift, spare elegance of Zen ink paintings.

In Mislove's series "Cries and Whispers," bouquets of dead flowers as ruefully evocative as the Rolling Stones song of that title are laid down in loose, linear strokes of thinned, translucent acrylic with the consistency of dried blood— albeit in more luminous red, orange, green, blue, and yellow hues.

According to the artist, these gnarled, tortured-looking floral outbursts allude, however indirectly, to topical subjects such as "the Northern Alliance fighters as hero / killers" and "the Taliban as killer /believers turned victims." Their colorful forms share generous expanses of bare Arches paper with sketchy / ghostly figures evoked in pencil: cerebral male heads and sensual female nudes that may allude to sexual politics as well.

But the real excitement in Eileen Mislove's drawings comes from the purely spatial tensions she creates, as well as the splashy gestural panache with which she reconciles abstract and figurative elements in compositions possessed of exhilarating velocity and exquisite poetic grace.

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