

Susie Reiss

COOHAUS ART

Susie Reiss makes paintings that induce a state of wonder. It would be difficult not to be seduced by her elusive brushstrokes and waves of color. However, close viewing reveals that the "brushstrokes" are actually translucent fabrics that have been stained and laid down on wood panels.

Reiss builds these works by layering the textiles to create expressive abstractions suggestive of mountainous landscapes, flora, clusters of soft-edged jewels, or underwater scenes that appear to ebb and flow. Most interesting in the pieces is the fact that vaguely human forms seem to emerge occasionally, aided by the fact that the colored fabrics retain the quality of the canvases' "skin." Pieces of silky cloth overlap beautifully to create a flat surface, and each layer becomes indistinguishable from the others, further adding to the magical quality of the works.

Each of the ten compositions in the show seemed perfectly coherent and logical, with many veils of color working in harmony with the others, even when hairlike threads emerge and encroach on one another. Purples coexist with grays as green makes itself seen from underneath, and peach shines brightly.

In addition to the stunning fabric creations, the artist presented six small canvases in the gallery office area made from yarn knitted onto canvas. These, however, might have been mistaken for the work of another artist, and they were desperately upstaged by the works in the main room. Nevertheless, Reiss's sense of color and form as well as her ability to caress her materials were evident in these less abstracted embroidered pieces. As the compositions throughout the gallery seemed to undulate and breathe, it was as if strong but pleasing emotions, or perhaps the memory of them, had been captured and rendered in color.

—Doug McClellmont



Susie Reiss, *First light on the mountain*, 2013, fabrics on wood panel, 45" x 36". COOHAUS ART.

Lluís Lleó

Elkon

The work of Lluís Lleó is an argument in favor of the physical object in our digital age. This beautiful show, which included paintings on canvas, paper, and silk, was an homage to the materials themselves—their size, weight, density, and texture. In some pieces, the ink seemed to float like a cloud above the paper. In others, the surface of the canvas was slick and reflective.

Lleó is a Catalan artist who's lived in New York since the late 1980s, but his work retains a very Spanish connection to the

elements. His imagery evokes weathered wood, earth, and ancient stones. It hovers between figuration and abstraction. One painting may suggest an adobe wall with a door in it; another might suggest a woman's genitals. Yet these pieces can also be seen as explorations in pure form and color.

The artist often reworks the same composition in different sizes and mediums. A purple rectangle superimposed on a gray hexagon against a green background appears on a large canvas, as well as in a much smaller version on handmade Nepalese paper. The effect is entirely different: on canvas, the design is smooth and geometric; on paper, it's earthy and basic.

Another composition, titled *Home* (2013), features a tall, post-like yellow rectangle, balanced on both sides by shapes that resemble a lintel, and topped by three blue-gray circles. One version was executed on Japanese silk attached to canvas. The ripples in the silk make the blocky shapes appear ephemeral. Painted on paper, the same design evokes power and stability. This was a perfect example of art rooted in its materials.

—Mona Molarsky



Lluís Lleó, *Home*, 2013, oil, ink, and pencil on Bhutan Mitsumata paper, 41" x 31". Elkon.