

CLAIRE SEIDL: ROSENBERG + KAUFMAN FINE ART

Karen Wilkin - 1996

Partisan Review 3

CLAIRE SEIDL

For some time, Claire Seidl has been showing serious, well-crafted, energetic canvases that have consistently rewarded attention. Good as many of these earlier pictures were, however, her new large-scale, near-monochrome paintings at Rosenberg + Kaufman Fine Art were more ambitious, more complex, and better than anything I'd seen of hers before. (They also surpassed the smaller, more tightly packed canvases in the exhibition.) Scaling up liberates Seidl's drawing and makes her paintings breathe.

Her coiled, scribbled skeins of paint seem to unravel as you watch, their dense opacities fraying into transparency. As in the past, there are hints of landscape space in the large pictures, but what seems most important is not allusion but mood. Seidl's paintings are at once brooding and exuberant, as though they embodied both her pleasure in the act of putting paint on a surface and her anxiety about letting her unstable images uncoil from the end of her painting tool - an abstract metaphor for the thoughtful artist's simultaneous confidence and doubt about what she is up to.

claireseidl.com