

CLAIRE SEIDL: ROSENBERG + KAUFMAN FINE ART

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CLAIRE SEIDL

The paintings of Claire Seidl, currently the subject of an exhibition at Rosenberg + Kaufman Fine Art, are so redolent of the natural world that it's easy to forget they're abstract. They evoke the rushing of waterfalls, an oncoming bank of ominous clouds or the lazy drift of a shimmering stream, but do so by inference, not example; nothing is spelled out for us. Ms. Seidl pictures nature as an imponderable, mutable presence, one as pitiless as it is powerful. Although she works her surfaces like an ump-teenth-generation Abstract Expressionist – layering and scrubbing and scraping – the paintings are strangely acultural. Their stylings are subsumed – and impressively so – by the artist's brooding, half-glimpsed visions.

Which isn't to say that these stylings are unimportant or that they don't, at times, falter. Ms. Seidl has yet to put a distinctive stamp on the massively intractable forms that are new to her art, and she's prone to pushing her paintings too hard. Having said that, my favorite picture, "The Explanation" (1999), is pushed too hard just right, and one sees in all the canvases a painter delving ever deeper into her art, pondering its mysteries and being a little dumbfounded by them, as well. Let's hope Ms. Seidl continues losing herself in her art, but doesn't get so lost that she's prevented from sending back reports of its knotty and allusive environs.

claireseidl.com