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Daniel Hesidence BY LYZ BLY

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Apparently Daniel Hesidence would rather not discuss what motivates him, nor is he interested in conceptually grounding his work. True to form, a body of his admittedly ambiguous abstractions was recently exhibited in Cleveland, complete with an inscrutable title, "Daniel Hesidence: 1 7 3 6" (the paintings are also indiscriminately titled *Untitled* (1 7 3 6)), all created within the last two years. According to curator Brett Shaheen, Hesidence declined to comment on the significance of this seemingly random number, instead inviting viewers to draw their own conclusions. Clearly, there is nothing new about rehashing the relation of viewership to subjectivity.

Hesidence has a history of eschewing secondary revision. A series of paintings and sculptures archived as *The Whole* (2002) depicts abstracted skin lesions, oozing sores, traumatized body parts, and facial disfigurements. This series is accessible online (www.thewholearchive.com), where Hesidence asserts: "[It] should not be discussed. The intention, the direction, or any element of the work must avoid a verbal format." Still, even the Ab-Ex greats gave us subtly evocative titles, such as Jackson Pollock's *Number 1 (Lavender Mist)*

(1950), Lee Krasner's *Shooting Gold* (1955) and Mark Rothko's *Green, Red, Blue* (1955). These titles remain appropriately guarded yet continue to play the audience game, enticing us away from the routine distractions of everyday life into the formalist rigors of abstract painting.

In their own terms, however, one would readily agree that Hesidence's "1 7 3 6" series is technically and visually engaging, being mainly reminiscent of Morris Louis's 1960s color-field work. One large piece—again, they are all nominally indistinguishable—is awash with translucent pinks, browns, and blues, culminating in a pair of interlocked, tremulous figure eights. However, Louis's characteristic edge-to-edge color saturation is largely absent from this particular canvas, offering instead broad, subtly textured brushstrokes tipped with hot globules of pigment.

Hesidence has already received favorable reviews in New York and is currently included in London's "USA Today," opening October 6. This latest American barn sale, organized by British art collector and gallery owner Charles Saatchi in collaboration with the Royal Academy of Arts, features such rising luminaries as Barnaby Furnas and Ryan McGinness, as well as bona fide art star Dana Schutz. While Hesidence is clearly keeping excellent company, he may wish to forgo his hesitance about conveying content if he wants to stay connected.

