



## Daniel Hesidence, "1779 / Pedestrians"

Joseph R. Wolin



Daniel Hesidence's abstract paintings, broad strokes of chunky impasto seem to float on top of smoothly brushed fields of marbled color, as if they lie on different focal planes. On smaller canvases, that effect suggests figure-ground relationships: The knobby ovoid of thick strokes in one green piece—all the works are cryptically designated *Untitled (1 7 7 9/Pedestrians)*—suggests the head in Munch's *The Scream*. In another, hung eccentrically high in a corner, a U-shaped twist of purple strokes appears to cleave through glowing space like a comet.

The larger works read as unified phenomena. Blurred, softly undulating swaths of brick red, shot through with streaks of turquoise, pink and white on an atmospheric 8-by-11-foot canvas describe an unearthly curtain of gaseous flame. On the white ground of another composition the same size, a sinuous blob of sickly pastels evokes smeared flowers; imagine Georgia O'Keeffe interpreted by Gerhard Richter on an acid trip.

Yet like O'Keeffe's, Hesidence's paintings readily equate the botanical and the bodily. A large vertical one depicts a plantlike configuration in brown, green and fleshy pink with a pair of dark voids at its base—orifices divided by a bolt of white light like a brilliant uvula. The luminous forms vaporize into darkness at the top, while long daubs hurtle downward toward the abyss. Hesidence makes strangely beautiful action paintings, simultaneously carnal and cosmic.