

Art in America

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EXHIBITION REVIEWS

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View of Daniel Hesidence's exhibition "Autumn Buffalo," 2010; at D'Amelio Terras.

DANIEL HESIDENCE D'AMELIO TERRAS

Accepting that the singular masterpiece is no longer possible nor even something to strive for, Daniel Hesidence gives all of his works within a given series the same title. Thus all of the paintings shown in Hesidence's solo exhibition at D'Amelio Terras gallery last fall are called "Untitled (Autumn Buffalo)"; all are dated 2010 and must be identified by their inventory numbers. DH-0953-PTG, for example, is 54 by 72 inches, has a gestural chocolate-colored scribble in the center of a pristine white canvas, and is reminiscent of Gerhard Richter's wonderful *Tisch* (Table) of 1962.

In 16 paintings ranging in size from expansive (8½ by 11 feet) to intimate (three works have a larger dimension of 20 inches), Hesidence develops themes of shape, texture and color in an abstract idiom that owes a debt to de Kooning and O'Keeffe. Ultimately, though, Hesidence, born in 1975, breaks new ground. Perhaps attempting to get away from the jewel-toned beauty that characterized his last New York solo show at Feature Inc. in

2008, Hesidence keys his palette in the current series primarily to earthy siennas and umbers. On an initial read the works may seem similar, and drab, but these paintings reward sustained contemplation. Spend some time with them and they come to life, with vibrant violets and sapphire blues that incandesce through the browns.

The compositions are often made up of lassos or collections of roller-coaster loops, and the marks build in density toward the center of the canvas, sometimes suggesting an abstracted figure. In one of the two largest works in the show, daubs of violet, peach and Statue-of-Liberty green accumulate into a shape that suggests a four-legged creature seen from the side, perhaps the buffalo of the series title. Yet it is also possible to read the works as landscapes—even to discover landscapes *within* the figures—by virtue of their intricate textures, layering and perspectival effects. Outlined in white in another work, vaporous beings are licked by hellfire in the lower middle distance. At the other end of the scale, Hesidence's shifting imagery may be seen as an imagined view at the cellular or molecular level.

Like Richter, Hesidence is both a student

and a master of technique. Experiments with paint application are evident throughout. Paint is laid onto the canvas not only via long, streaky brushstrokes, but also using non-brush implements that leave track- or patternlike marks, or clumps. Recurring small white clusters strung together in a line may remind you of dinosaur vertebrae or cat footprints on a car. Sudden shifts in the thickness and texture of the paint can be thrilling, like the vertiginous feeling produced by a sudden lack of focus in film. But the works go beyond skilled execution. Their content feels deep and true; this is technique having found its purpose.

—Jeff Frederick