

Lisa Cooley is pleased to present an exhibition of paintings by Jon Pestoni, which will run from January 16 until February 20, with a reception for the artist on Sunday, January 16, from 6 until 8 pm. This is the artist's first solo exhibition in New York City.

Jon Pestoni's paintings reward the careful viewer. His works not only consider the nuances of light, spatial tension, and materiality but they also display an abrupt, visceral engagement with color and gesture. They are aware, direct, forceful, yet understanding them demands perceptive, repeated views. A painting which might appear to be a drab, post-minimal accumulation of quick marks, is also a primal, vibrational study, imbued with thought and economy.

Restrained and focused, Pestoni's new works move away from suggestions of figuration and small, lyrical, surface marks toward an amplified palette, larger scale and bolder, aggressive forms. His characteristically abrasive, dry-brushed smears still slump down the surface, while his wide, obliterative, horizontally dragged marks conceal and recede, with meandering angles and saturated colors. The contrast between dry, light stroke and blunt, opaque band creates an alluring tension – doubly so, as this opposition also induces a sense that light is emanating from within the canvas. The physical interplay of surfaces, either glistening or light-absorbing, heightens the artist's manipulation of light.

Most importantly, Pestoni's work plays with ideas of negation. Articulated passages are blocked out, nullified and barred from viewing. However, the artist aims only to amplify awareness of the work's materiality and nuance by pushing us towards the margins. Pestoni uses the act of building up and breaking down, painting something in and painting something out, to document a practice of looking, thinking, and searching for what is just out of reach.

Jon Pestoni lives and works in Los Angeles. He received his BA in Art from UC Berkeley in 1992 and his MFA from UCLA in 1996. His paintings were included in *The White Columns New York Annual* 2008, curated by Jay Sanders. His work has also been exhibited in New York, most recently this summer in *The Pursuer*, at GreeneNaftali Gallery, and in a two-person presentation at the gallery with Zak Prekop in 2009. Other exhibitions include shows at Shane Campbell Gallery in Chicago, Leo Koenig Inc and Marianne Boesky Gallery, both in New York, as well as at Galerie Parisa Kind in Frankfurt, Germany. Since 2005 he has lectured in Studio Art at UC Irvine, UCLA and UC Riverside. His work will appear in the upcoming publication, *Vitamin P*, published by Phaidon.

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