

MARIANNE BOESKY GALLERY

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STRIPPED, TIED AND RAW

Jorge Eielson, Donald Moffett, David Noonan, Steven Parrino, Salvatore Scarpitta

January 15 – February 13, 2010

Opening Reception Thursday, January 14, 2010, 6 – 8 pm

Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to present the works of Jorge Eielson, Donald Moffett, David Noonan, Steven Parrino and Salvatore Scarpitta. From the 1950's to the present these artists have stripped, ripped, twisted, draped, stretched and stitched the canvas to create works that push the definition of painting.

For over a century the notion of materiality has intrigued philosophers – debating the hierarchy of form over substance and vice versa. Art critics also joined this debate in the latter half of the 20th Century when artists began tackling these concepts in actual practice, with some artists discovering the possibility of an easy truce. In 1961 with the introduction of the X form in his work Salvatore Scarpitta proclaimed he was “breaking the constriction of the rectangle.” So it is that each of these five artists has broken free from the dimensional confines of the stretcher while remaining true to painting, material and form assuming equal weight as content.

Jorge Eielson is most recognized for his use of the *quipus*, a knot imbued with cosmic symbolism and used as an ancient Incan counting system. Born in Peru to a Peruvian mother and Swedish father, Eielson's work matured in Italy where he spent the bulk of his adult life. Fashioning his quipus from fabric that was once a shirt or rope or burlap, Eielson twists and stretches his material over the flat surface of the canvas, creating a physical object where both tension and serenity coexist.

The late 1950's work of Salvatore Scarpitta also appears wrought with tension, but with a visceral edge not readily evident in the more contemplative works of Eielson. The artist has said after his experiences with WWII “I started ripping up the oil paintings, the canvas that had become an utter enemy for me...I needed to run the risk of leaving fingerprints.” The resulting works comprised of ripped raw canvas strips resembling bandages speak of both wounds and healing.

Steven Parrino's work and persona is often linked to preoccupations of death and nihilism further mythicized by the artist's own premature death. Despite coming of age in an era Parrino has described as when “the word on painting was ‘Painting Is Dead’. I saw this as an interesting place for painting...and this death painting thing led to a sex and death painting thing...that became an existence thing.” Parrino's “misshaped paintings,” as he referred to them, are in essence about existence and the possibilities of what painting can be.

Donald Moffett's recent paintings appear abstract, but upon closer examination distinct corporeal references and orifices emerge. The canvas is itself a body. Unlike the punctures and slashes of Fontana, Moffett's holes are precise with sutured edges and his cuts are methodical and neatly zipped. His flayed paintings are just that – stripped as a body is skinned. A founding member of the Gran Fury collective, Moffett's measured exploitation of his raw materials concentrates his works pointed political and sexual content.

David Noonan's work appears more directly figural, silkscreen images on collaged raw linen. The images themselves are often blurred and re-imagined through cutting and re-assembly. The tradition of collage allowing the artist to build a multi-layered narrative in which there is no hierarchy of images. While the narratives are left open for interpretation, the materials themselves imbue the work with an atmospheric antique ambiance, like 19th Century sepia prints.

As Scarpitta aptly stated, “I wanted to make air circulate there where the canvas, with its form had become oppressive.”

Marianne Boesky Gallery is located at 509 West 24th Street, between 10th and 11th Avenues. Our hours are Tuesday to Saturday from 10am to 6pm. For further information or images, please contact Serra Pradhan at 212.680.9889 or serra@marianneboeskygallery.com.