

ARTE FUSE

Christopher Le Brun: At Once Covered and New



Christopher Le Brun at Friedman Benda

Into each life of an artist, some paint must fall. But depending on the intent, does it fall accidentally or deliberately to enforce the old or define the new? These are the push-pull dynamics explored in the latest show of **Christopher Le Brun** at Friedman Benda for his opening of *New Paintings* last September 11th.

I walked into the gallery immediately greeted by the grandiose scale of the canvas where his broad strokes of color and markings tend to cover yet reveal in the same breadth. It can be seen initially as abstract painting in the traditional vein of let's say a Clyfford Still who is an abstract expressionist and master colorist. But that is just on the surface scan of Le Brun's current oeuvre then something evolved in his work that rises to the occasion.

Laluyan, Oscar A. "Christopher Le Brun: At Once Covered and New," *Arte Fuse*. September 15, 2014.

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Two paintings by Christopher Le Brun photo from Friedman Benda Gallery

The abstract plane done by Le Brun is not blown apart or falling off the edge. A sense of lush compact forms piled on by more paint strokes done crosswise in an effort to obliterate had more of a cloaking effect. There is more to that swath of fiery red in the lustrous golden yellow. The warm colored pieces emanated heat while the cooler palette ones drenched with its water-like feel. It can be a detriment for artists to pile it on thinking more is more, which can result into a heavy clod or a clunker but Le Brun avoids that danger. His broad strokes, static back and forth brush lines, color values, and an eye to controlled chaos anchored the pieces into having the substance without being weighed down by a heavy hand. One's eye traveled on any of his canvas viewed a harnessed wealth of what is inside and not the abstract fantasy of what shoots out of the quadrant.

The work is ambitious because of its dominating size, arresting hues, concentrated forms, and generosity of motion. Le Brun blasted through the color fields, finessed the frenetic broad strokes, managed the static energy, and grounded the evocative nature of his new paintings. I could spend a day or weeks just to sit and watch the canvas develop at a slow burn. It's like that song Fever with the lyric, "what a lovely way to burn." Le Brun gave us a slow burn instead of a quick burst of consuming flame. It is not that obvious but what slowly reveals itself has a lot more glowing embers to sear an impression that his abstract work is definitely a loaded smoking gun. Yes, what lovely way to burn indeed!



Installation shot from Friedman Benda Gallery

Christopher Le Brun: New Paintings / On View: Sept. 11 – Oct. 18, 2014

Gallery Hours: Monday to Friday (10 am – 6 pm)

Friedman Benda. 515 West 26th Street. NYC, NY 10001

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Big statement paintings by Christopher Le Brun



The work of Christopher Le Brun lights up the gallery of Friedman Benda

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