

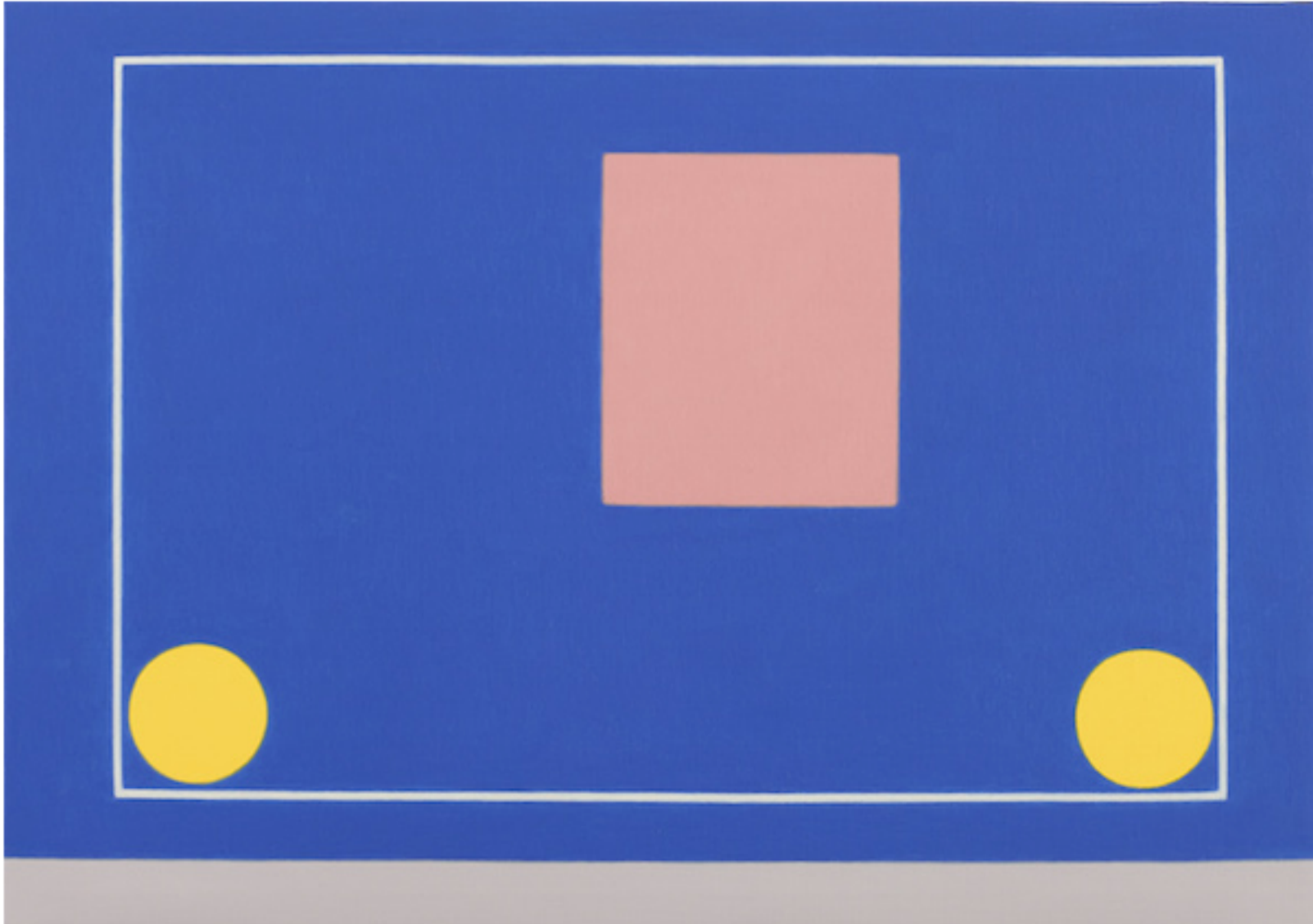
Guy Yanai

Selected Press 2013-2015

IN BRIEF

Israeli Sensation Guy Yanai Curates Group Show in Tel Aviv

Lorena Muñoz-Alonso, Thursday, August 27, 2015



Ridley Howard, *Blue and Yellow* (2011)

Photo: Courtesy the gallery

The young Israeli artist Guy Yanai is having quite a moment. Hot on the heels of his successful solo exhibition in New York's Ameringer McEnery Yohe gallery, entitled "Ancient River," the Tel Aviv-based Alon Segev Gallery has announced the opening of a painting group exhibition curated by Yanai.



Guy Yanai, *Bye Torino* (2014-15)
Photo: Courtesy the gallery

Entitled "Words Without Letters," the exhibition will feature Yanai's paintings, alongside works by fellow Israeli artists Avner Ben-Gal and Gideon Rubin, and the American artists Ridley Howard and Ted Gahl, who are both exhibiting their work in Israel for the first time.

The curatorial conceit of the exhibition began with a question posed by Yanai's young son: Is there such a thing as words without letters?



Gideon Rubin, *Yellow Blindfold* (2015)

Photo: Courtesy the gallery

Inspired by the unintentional koan, Yanai has curated a show that explores how communicating with images as opposed to words is still a key aspect of human life, and one that dates back thousands of years.

The remainder of 2015 will be busy for the young painter, whose work will be showcased in exhibitions at Galerie Derouillon, in Paris, and Coburn Projects London. Yanai's work was part of the group exhibition "Senses of the Mediterranean" at Hangar Bicocca, Milan.



Ridley Howard, *Make Out* (2015)
Photo: Courtesy the gallery

"Words Without Letters" will be on view at Alon Segev Gallery, Tel Aviv, from September 3 – October 16, 2015.

Guy Yanai's Pixelated Style Brings Classic Painting Into The Modern Age

By **Liz Von Klemperer** - Jul 29, 2015



Claire's Knee II (2015), Guy Yanai

Guy Yanai's pieces fuse the placid landscapes and still lives of traditional painting with a pixelated style inspired by retro computer graphics. His solo show *Ancienne Rive* at the **Ameringer McEnery Yohe** gallery features fifteen new paintings in which Yanai uses fragmented stripes of color to demonstrate the interplay between the past, present, and future of art, as well as his own sense of displacement.

The Israeli artist, who received his MFA at Parsons in New York City and spent much of his life traveling, explores the alienation and rootlessness of constant flux. Many of his subjects are intentionally so commonplace that they do not connote any specific location. For example, *Longing for What was Once Foreign*, a boat sailing on placid water with a clear sky, could be anywhere, and *Non-Mediterranean House* is distinctly defined by where it is not. "It's not really clear where they are, or what space they are," says Yanai in an interview with [T Magazine](#). "They're nowhere, and in that sense it's really a very synthetic kind of work."



Guy Yanai's studio on January 18, 2015

Ancienne Rive not only reflects Yanai's personal history, it is also a comment on the role of painting in our increasingly digitized society. *Ancienne Rive* literally translates to "Ancient River" but the connotations of these French words give insight into the tone of the show. The French word "ancienne" translates to something that is old and traditional, and "rive" translates directly to river, but also colloquially means "edge." Yanai's work is truly on the edge of tradition, as he uses tried and true materials to depict the aesthetic of new technology.

***"PAINTING CAN BE SO DATED SOMETIMES," HE SAID.
THE TITLE OF THE SHOW "IS ALMOST LIKE, LAUGHING
AT THIS."***

Like the show's title, there is something complex behind these simple, immediately discernible images. Yanai explained in an interview with [The Chic](#) that he aims to create images that "quickly 'resonate' with the viewer, but upon further looking become something else entirely."

Ancienne Rive will be on display until August 14, so if you're in NYC check it out, or follow him on [social media](#) to keep track of upcoming exhibits.



Miracle Sicily Bye (2015), Guy Yanai



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Guy Yanai "Ancienne Rive" at Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe, New York

July 23~2015



Guy Yanai's fragmented stripes are paralleled by thick, vivid colors and banal subjects. "Ancienne Rive", meaning ancient river, calls upon ideas of history, authenticity, and something with deep roots, which contradicts the artist's self-proclaimed feelings of loneliness, foreign alienation and the notion of being both nowhere and everywhere.

This sentiment is a result of Yanai having spent time in numerous countries and not feeling a particular connection to a geographic location. However, as noted by Yanai, "nowhere has so many advantages, [one is] able to grab and steal from everything."

The commonplace subjects depicted in the artist's work directly reflect his idea of being rootless. Classical themes of landscape and still life are re-imagined in this new body of work and allow Yanai's vision to be both relatable and discernible to the viewer. Everyday subjects suggest that he is disenchanted by the throwaway nature of modern day society. Yet, there is a beauty in the simplicity and naiveté to his paintings.

Tension exists between every stripe as one coat of paint is used, leaving small areas of raw canvas. Each stripe is critical to the work's success. The seemingly mechanical nature of Yanai's paintings is misleading as the more time spent with the work, the more there is to discover.

at Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe, New York

until 14 August 2015







Guy Yanai "Ancienne Rive" installation views at Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe, New York, 2015
Courtesy: Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe, New York.

ARTSY

Contemporary Concerns, Prehistoric Medium: A Conversation with Israeli Painter Guy Yanai

ARTSY EDITORIAL

JUL 16TH, 2015 10:11 PM



Courtesy Guy Yanai.

Hours before he was to board a plane home to Tel Aviv, I sat with Guy Yanai in the middle of Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe in Chelsea, encircled by a selection of his light-infused paintings. Each of the pieces consists of stacked, horizontal stripes of pigment, as if their scenes were viewed from behind a subtle scrim of blinds. Although he'd been in New York for less than a week, for the successful opening of "Ancienne Rive," the solo show of new paintings that surrounded us, Yanai told me he was ready to return to his studio and to painting—to the work that most fulfills him.



Installation view of "Guy Yanai: Ancienne Rive," Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe, New York. Courtesy © 2015 Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe and the artist.

In fact, it seems as if choice never figured into Yanai's career. He always knew he wanted to be an artist, a desire that solidified at a young age. "When I was 15, I read this book by Toni Morrison. And it was so inspiring that I made this kind of teenager painting all night," he recounted. "And that's when I realized this is really what I wanted to do, forever." From that point forward, Yanai pursued painting with a sustained focus, achieving what he describes as "early success" in his late

teens and early 20s. “And then you get out of school and real life comes in,” he said. “I had to work as a graphic designer and do all these jobs, and it was really hard. I felt like I kind of failed. I had five difficult years, but those years now are so important for me—to be on the floor and then to climb back up.”



Guy Yanai's studio. Image courtesy © 2015 Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe and the artist.



Guy Yanai
End of Europe (Geographically) II, 2015
Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe
SOLD



Guy Yanai
Claire's Knee II, 2015
Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe
SOLD



Guy Yanai
Sainte Maxime, 2015
Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe
SOLD



Guy Yanai
Claire Climbing, 2015
Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe
SOLD

Since 2006, Yanai has been able to make art on a full-time basis, feeding a passion for painting that is so intuitive it seems almost unreasonable to ask him to put it into words. “I don’t think I chose painting. I think painting chose me,” he said. “When I start mixing paint and painting, I’m assuming it’s what it feels like for a heroin addict, to do something that feels so good.” But with this high comes a reality check, which Yanai is quick to point out. In the digital age, painting may be seen as an anachronism. And he prefers to work with only its most fundamental elements: pigments, brushes, and linen canvases.



Guy Yanai
Plant With Five Leaves, 2015
Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe
SOLD



Guy Yanai
Boat With No Sailors, 2015
Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe
SOLD



Guy Yanai
Last Splash, 2015
Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe
SOLD

Yanai may be working with an ancient medium, but he’s a decidedly 21st-century artist. Through the style and subject matter of his work, he aims to make his paintings as contemporary as possible. As he put it, painting is “a primitive thing. And then I want to flip it and make it something of the highest sophistication.... I want to grab those two poles at the same time—the highest sophistication and a real, primal kind of thing.”



Installation view of "Guy Yanai: Ancienne Rive," Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe, New York. Courtesy © 2015 Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe and the artist.

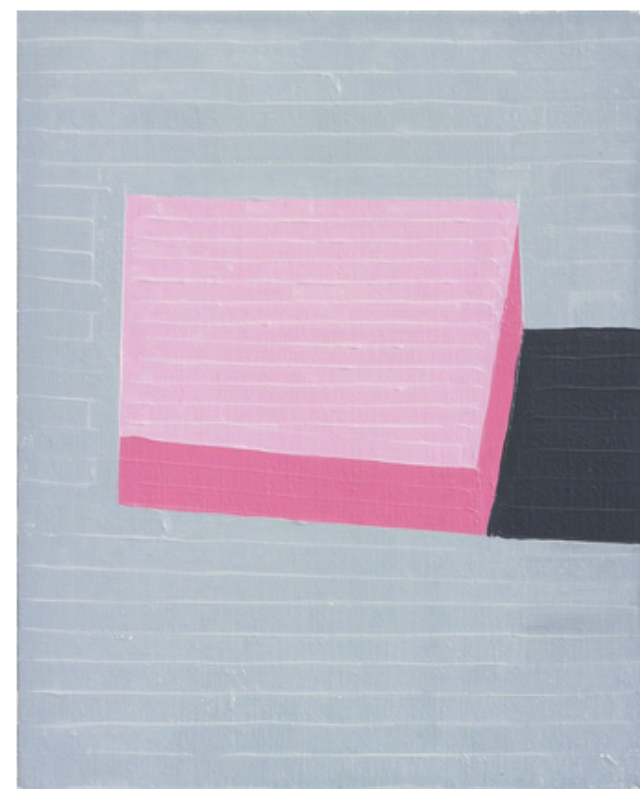
His process begins with images. In addition to tapping into the archive of iPhone photos he's built up over the years, Yanai culls them up from his memory, borrows them from the work of artists he admires, and pulls them from the web and social-media sites like Tumblr, among other sources. Everything is fair game. "The main job, after looking at and hoarding these images, is to edit them and to see what will be able to carry a painting," he explained. He always works on multiple canvases at once, isolating single images on some, combining a fragmentary assortment of disparate ones on others.



Guy Yanai
Non-Mediterranean House (After AK), 2015
 Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe
 SOLD



Guy Yanai
Untitled, 2015
 Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe
 SOLD



Guy Yanai
Pink Box on Bad Girl, 2014
 Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe
 SOLD

In “Ancienne Rive,” lakes, seas, swimming pools, and sprinklers intermingle with strips of land and sky, potted plants, and houses. Intimately scaled paintings dot the gallery walls, centered upon a single element—a pink box on a gray ground, the triangular tip of a roof, a sailboat on Lake Kinneret—and larger compositions read as tightly framed landscapes. All are rendered in bright, Levantine hues of pink, green, blue, gray, orange, and yellow, but these sun-soaked visions stem from darker concerns. Among them is Yanai’s fascination with edges and borders (“Rive” refers to the place where water meets land), and his keen awareness of the contentiousness of his own country’s borders—or, as he said, “I come from a country that really has no borders.”

Both actual and implied, borders structure these paintings—from the edges of each strip of color, to the separation between areas of water, land, and sky, to the places where walls of houses meet their outdoor surroundings. There are the edges of his canvases and what lies outside of them, his vignettes suggesting much larger spaces and terrains beyond the frame. While the disputes over Israel’s borders and their ramifications seep into who Yanai is as a person and an artist, he does not want to define his work solely by this conflict.



Guy Yanai
End of Europe (Geographically), 2015
 Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe
 SOLD



Guy Yanai
Ancienne Rive (A Tree and a Cave), 2015
 Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe
 \$16,000

“I’m more into confronting myself than confronting the political situation of my country and her neighbors,” he said. Perhaps more than anything else, he confronts within himself an unshakable sense of rootlessness, born from an upbringing marked by frequent moves with his family. “I’ve learned to embrace it,” he said. “I don’t go against it, I don’t struggle with it, I want to feel it out ... I want to be able to hold it.” And though this causes him pain, it makes for great art.

—Karen Kedmey

“Guy Yanai, Ancienne Rive” is on view at Ameringer | McEnery | Yohe, New York, Jul. 9 – Aug. 14, 2015.

ON VIEW

Guy Yanai's Thoroughly Modern Ancient Paintings

BY CELESTE MOURE | JULY 8, 2015 3:30 PM



The 15 new paintings on view in the artist Guy Yanai's exhibition "Ancienne Rive" include, at left, "Bye Torino," 2014-5, and, at right, "End of Europe (Geographically)," 2015. *Elad Sarig*

The young Israeli artist Guy Yanai is obsessed with borders — the way the paint touches the edge of a canvas; the liminal spaces between people and between people and places. "The show is really about edges between many things," he says of his solo exhibition "Ancienne Rive," which opens tomorrow at the Chelsea gallery Ameringer McEnery Yohe. Like much of his previous work, the 15 new paintings Yanai created for this show convey the everyday: sailboats, the sea, plants, a quiet lawn and a horseback rider are meticulously painted in vibrant horizontal stripes. "It's not really clear where they are, or what space they are," says Yanai. "They're nowhere, and in that sense it's really a very synthetic kind of work."

A piece titled “End of Europe (Geographically),” which features a potted plant he saw while vacationing in Portugal, exemplifies Yanai’s interest in physical and geographical boundaries. “It’s called ‘End of Europe’ because the western edge of Portugal is really where you can say is the end of Europe. On the east, who knows where Europe ends,” he says. Centered above the plant is an image of a boat gliding on a sea of blue, with the untouched white canvas on either side. “The way those marks are over the painting at the end, it’s in a way another layer, like another Photoshop layer,” he says. “In a way it’s like I’m not hiding the way I arrive at the paintings. It’s a little paradox, because they are these images, but could be broken down to lines and marks.”



From left: Yanai's "Middle East," 2015; "Ancienne Rive (A Tree and A Cave)," 2015. *Elad Sarig*

Yanai’s pieces look pixelated, in keeping with the digital age in which they were created — and the artist doesn’t shy away from mentioning computers, Photoshop and Instagram in conversation — but they are also reminiscent of objects made using centuries-old crafts, like needlepoint or weaving. His style, he says, “references a lot of ancient things but also a lot of new things. All at the same time.” Yanai recalls his collaboration with the Band of Outsiders designer **Scott Sternberg** on his 2014 resort collection, which featured summery dresses and pretty cotton separates adorned with reinterpretations of Yanai’s paintings. “He showed me his mood board and half of it was works of mine,” he says. “In one call we basically set up the whole method of working. We did it all through Skype and Dropbox.”

While on vacation in France, Yanai kept seeing the word “*ancienne*.” His French girlfriend explained that the word can be used to describe something that’s very traditional — or done in the correct way. “Rive” means the edge or boundary of something. “Ancienne is such a nice-sounding word. And it looks so nice with Rive,” he says. “Painting can be so dated sometimes.” The title of the show, he adds, “is almost like laughing at this.”

“Ancienne Rive” is on view July 9-Aug. 14 at Ameringer McEnery Yohe, 525 West 22nd Street, New York, amy-nyc.com.

On the edge: Guy Yanai to showcase new extraordinary paintings of the ordinary everyday at Ameringer McEnery Yohe in New York

ART / 16 JUN 2015 / BY ALI MORRIS



'Ancienne Rive' is an exhibition of new works by young Israeli artist Guy Yanai at New York gallery Ameringer McEnery Yohe. Pictured: Claire's Knee II, 2015

Appearing like pixilated images, brightly coloured weavings or even needlepoint, Guy Yanai's oil on linen paintings depict simplified interpretations of the everyday painted in meticulously applied strokes of colour. From pot plants to sail boats, the artist paints ordinary still life subjects and sun-soaked landscapes but in a way that makes them current, gliding the brush across the canvas, one line at a time.

Titled 'Ancienne Rive', the young Israeli artist's latest solo exhibition, opening 9 July at Ameringer McEnery Yohe in New York, showcases a collection of brand new works. 'I really like the way these two words feel,' says Yanai of the show's title. 'There is a lot of blue and water in all the works and all the paintings are deeply rooted in the contemporary context, yet somehow speak to the old, to the ancient. And of course edges, I'm obsessed with edges, both in painting and with people.'

Inspired by the Mediterranean climate and vegetation of his native Tel Aviv among many other things – 'films, people, experiences', Yanai's use of bold blocks of colour and sunny coastal scenes has led to comparisons with Hockney – in particular his paintings of Californian homes and pools. 'I pay homage [to Hockney] in a very personal way though,' says Yanai. 'I put my own memory and experience on top of some idealistic image of his,' adding, 'sometimes things aren't what they seem. In that way maybe the colour is a decoy for something else, to lure the viewer in at first.'

In the past, his multilayered approach has caught the eye of the fashion world, resulting in crossover collaborations with US label Band Of Outsiders on its 2014 resort collection and a skateboard for New York fashion brand Woodpoint & Kingsland in 2013. 'Collaborating with different fields and different projects is something that I like,' enthuses Yanai. 'I get to work with other people - not so normal in the studio routine - and see results that could have never happened alone.'

INFORMATION

'Ancienne Rive' runs at
Ameringer McEnery Yohe,
New York from 9 July - 14
August 2015; www.amy-nyc.com

Cognitive Dissonance: Studio Visit with Guy Yanai

by TARA LANGE

Guy Yanai's 2015 work highlights his creative evolution and newfound confidence as an artist. The Israeli born painter currently lives and works in Tel Aviv, and the colorful palate of his surroundings as well as the vibrant, live-life-in-the-moment energy of his city shines through in his pieces.



His new body of work differs from that of prior collections in that it's more "open source": what you see is what you get. The paint appears almost pixelated because every brush stroke is visible to the viewer – making his process completely transparent.

This collection also, more clearly than ever, showcases an important theme for Yanai: one of cognitive dissonance. Yanai puts forth a paradox; work that represents both his cerebral state of hyper-consciousness and his subconscious emotional motives.

“Cognitive dissonance is really the irrationality of it all, isn't it? The space between those two edges. In that space anything can happen.”

Yanai adds, “I think great painting today has to hold up a few poles that are opposing simultaneously. This may not be evident to the viewer, but I think its conscious while making the work. Life is filled with these things: a tree and a stoplight, a cat and an iPhone. Each painting is particular, it can never be the same; then it just becomes routine and mannered.”

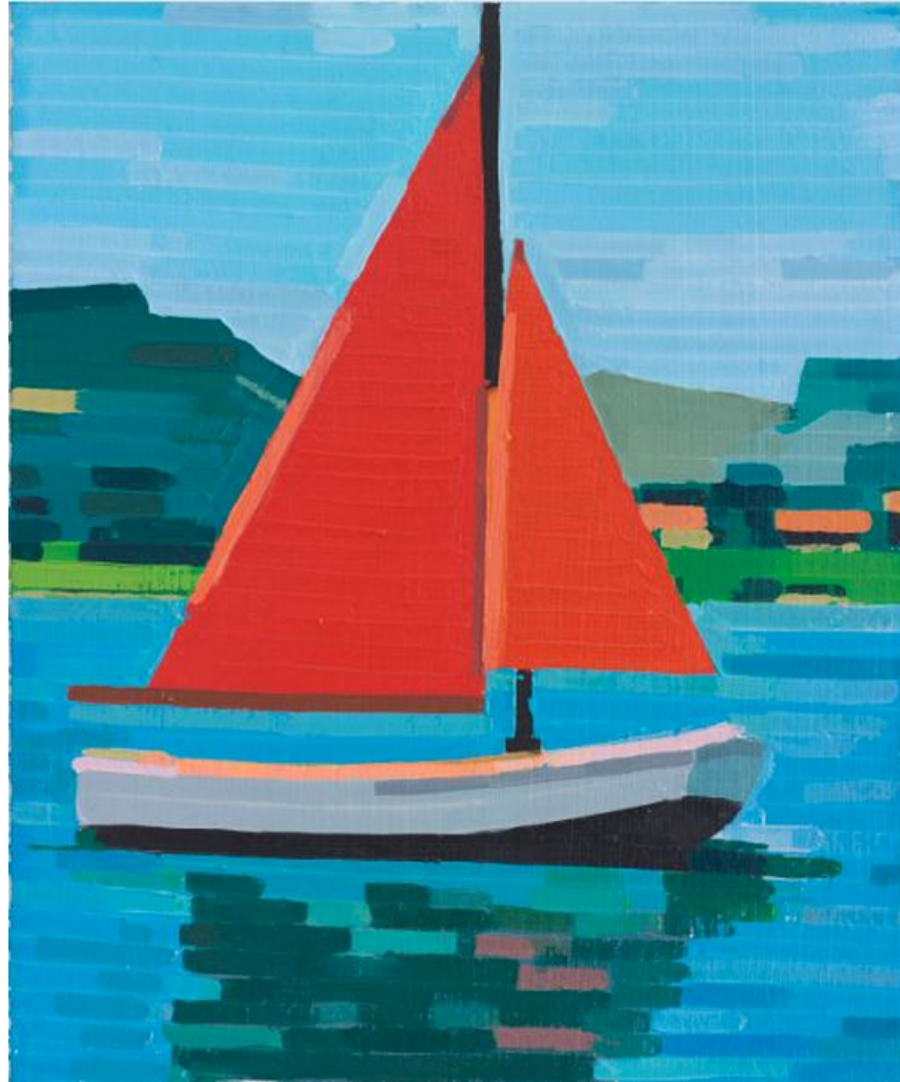
Since graduating Parsons School of Design and the New York Studio School Yanai has exhibited in cities like Paris, Copenhagen, New York, Tel Aviv, Boston, Milan, and others. His upcoming solo exhibition at the Ameringer McEnery Yohe Gallery in NYC will open July 9 and run through August 2015.

Recent solo exhibitions include Diary, at Galerie Derouillon, Paris; First Battle Lived Accident, at Alon Segev Gallery, Tel-Aviv; Accident Nothing at Aran Cravey Gallery, Los Angeles; Battle Therapy Living Room at the Velan Center for Contemporary Art, Turin; and Lived & Laughed & Loved & Left at La Montagne Gallery, Boston.

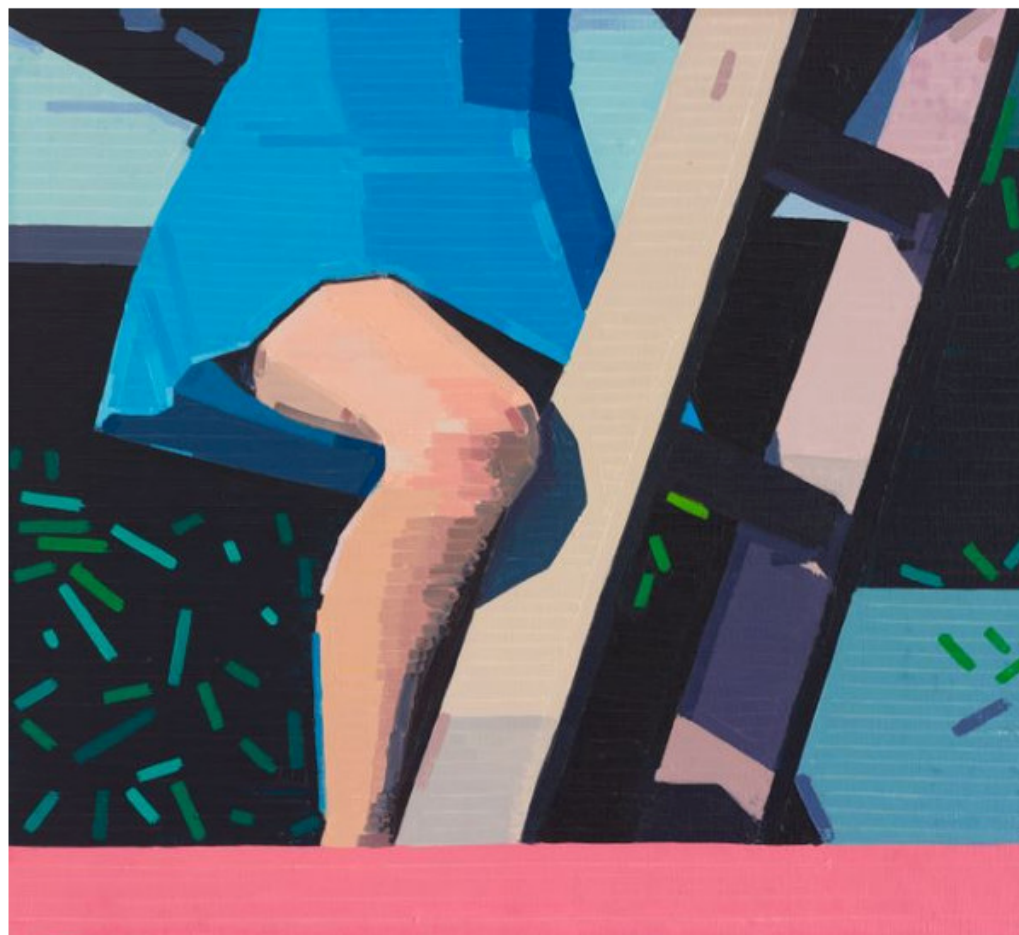
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Guy Yanai: Ancienne Rive

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Boat With No Sailors, 2015



Claire's Knee II, 2015



Sprinkler for Grandfather (After DH), 2015



Claire Climbing II, 2015



Last Splash, 2015

"Nowhere has so many advantages, [one is] able to grab and steal from everything," observes Tel Aviv-based artist Guy Yanai, whose feelings of loneliness, foreign alienation, and sense of being both nowhere and everywhere at the same time result from spending time in numerous countries without feeling a particular connection to a geographic location.

Yet, despite this sense of rootlessness, Yanai has a deeper connection with the flux and flow of the creative life force. *Ancienne Rive*, an exhibition of fifteen new paintings by Guy Yanai, opens at Ameringer McEnery Yohe Galler, New York, on July 9, 2015 and will remain on view through August 14, 2015.

Ancienne Rive, Yanai's debut New York exhibition, is accompanied by a catalogue, also titled *Ancienne Rive*, with texts by Cary S. Levine and Timothee Chaillou, designed by Aurore Chauve and published by Yanai and Chauve's publishing house, Yundler Brondino Verlag.

Ancienne Rive, meaning "ancient river," calls upon ideas of history, authenticity, and something with deep roots. The artist draws inspiration from Old Masters' paintings and everyday products to current issues of contemporary culture, resulting in large paintings with bold colors and sharpened shapes, and causing the distance through simplification and detachment with a whimsical undertone.

The commonplace, everyday subjects depicted in the artist's work directly reflect his idea of being rootless. These seemingly disposable subjects suggest that he is disenchanted by the throwaway nature of modern day society. Yet, there is a beauty in the simplicity and naiveté to his paintings.

Yanai speaks with The Chic about his life in art. He observes, "In a way I always knew that art is all I wanted to do. In fact the hardest thing was facing this, and not being scared of it. I had a big fight with the art teacher in high school, and kind of got thrown out, so I entered this great private school, very liberal. There I was introduced to John Cage, de Kooning, Rauschenberg, Chris Burden. So my eyes were open at the age of 16, the trouble was keeping them open."

Speaking about the work created for *Ancienne Rive*, Yanai reveals, "The concept behind the exhibition focuses on edges, and the meeting of. Land meeting water. space between entities. Deviously simple images that are a decoy to something else. To the invisible that is behind the visual. The aim in this show is to create images that burn in the viewers mind.

After a few years of dealing with the 'irreconcilable' in painting, these works are more about works that quickly 'resonate' with the viewer, but upon further looking become something else entirely. Exploring art history, visual culture, the nature of paint and painting, and the 'hand' in the post internet age of art."

The artist further makes reference to the inspirations that have influenced his work. He notes, "One of the images that has been around me for a long time is Fra Angelico's *Noli Me Tangere* ["Touch Me Not"] fresco. The main anchor of the show, *Ancienne Rive* is directly based on that work. I wanted to see where I could take it.

"I love now. I love our age. It is really the best time to be alive, I feel. So, alongside 650 year-old frescoes, I look at everything around us: a screen, a tree, a plant, a film, a political event, a Tumblr blog—anything really. The main job an artist has now is to be able to edit how we look."

Yanai discusses the challenges of creating work exclusively for the exhibition. He observes, "The rhythm of building a body of work is very particular and strange. All of the works were made together, in one room, where they were all being worked on simultaneously. They are, in a way, one incoherent group. There is a momentum, though.

"Once I finished the large work *Ancienne Rive*, everything fell into place. I knew where to take what and where to put what. To really put together an exhibition, something that is greater than just a few paintings, I really tried to let the work define itself, to let the group edit itself, to not get in the way. This demands a rigorous studio routine, to just be in the studio as much as possible. There are always the external parameters, the gallery space, shipping, et cetera, but I also try to transcend those in the simplest way possible. It's a real human process with sparks and failures. I knew that I wanted a lot of water and blue throughout the whole show. The idea of where land and water meet—that edge. This work is really about edges meeting edges, in every way that you can imagine."



Non Mediterranean House, 2015



Miracle Sicily Bye, 2015



Restrained Splash Bye, 2015



Yves on Polke, 2015

Wall Street International

Wednesday, 26 March 2014

AGENDA - Israel, Arts

Guy Yanai. First Battle Lived Accident

3 April - 16 May 2014 at Alon Segev Gallery, Tel Aviv



Guy Yanai, *Pink Studio (For Ava) After Matisse, 2014*, oil on linen, 180 x 240 cm

First Battle Lived Accident is comprised from a seemingly incoherent body of works, manifesting the irreconcilable nature of painting. This new group of paintings is a concentrate from Yanai's work of the past three years, hence the exhibition's title is derived from the first word of each title of his previous four solo shows.

The show is comprised of eleven paintings. First there are two very large interiors: Pink Studio (for Ava), obviously referencing Matisse's Pink Studio from exactly one hundred years ago, and Pink iPad on Sofa, a painting of the artist's current home. Another large-scaled painting named Sardinian Pool depicts a pool in southern Sardinia. Five medium-sized works derived from previous imagery from Yanai's older paintings, and plants. Three of these works have two or three images in a single painting. Sicily is taken from a plant in the old city of Syracuse that was photographed by Yanai two years ago, and University is derived purely from strangers' photographs. The other three works – Plant, Banana and A Painting; Syracuse Plant and a Picture, and Pink House Haus Valvoline – combine more than one "image" on the picture plane. The three latter works combine previous paintings by Yanai that are "collaged" on the linen, but instead of actual collage they are painstakingly painted. Two additional small works are themes that have been used recently in Yanai's work: Another Splash But With A Splash II depicts a pool that closely resembles David Hockney's A Bigger Splash, and Kibbutz Shefayim Guest and Rest House is a depiction of a Kibbutz Guest House. The final, smallest painting in the exhibition is a portrait of a banana.

It is precisely in these unconnected subjects and sizes that the show's thematic soundness of the exhibition rests.

These works differ from the previous years' work in that they are not squares and in that they mainly have one coat of paint. Yanai maintains a devout studio practice, painting daily, and it is precisely this routine that conditions the extraordinary quality that we see in his work. The paint being applied in horizontal "stripes" that simultaneously convey painting in its purest element, the element of time in a frozen image, a way for the viewer to undo the work, and to deconstruct the color in the works to single strokes of paint. This meticulous working methodology enables the paintings to walk a very tight rope between figuration and abstraction. The feeling is that if one mark of paint is removed, then the painting falls apart; this inherent tension in the work sometimes contradicts the image of the work thus adding more cognitive layers while experiencing the work.

Guy Yanai has carved out a special niche amongst the Israeli art scene, where mainly installation, performance and new media art has proliferated. Today's art operates within a field of disenchantment and cynicism, which is true of painting in particular. Yanai's painting too corresponds to an age of commodified goods and consumerism, whether via its material objects or ubiquitous images, but there is simplicity and a naiveté to his love of painting, a love that is perhaps the driving force behind his prolific output. His work derives, then, not from the dark pits but from the fountain; not from desperation but from faith.

Born 1977 in Haifa, Israel, Guy Yanai currently lives and works in Tel Aviv. He attended Parsons School of Design and the New York Studio School, and received a BFA from Hampshire College, Amherst, MA.

Yanai has had exhibitions at the Jerusalem Studio School Gallery, Gallery 33, Tel Aviv; A.L.I.C.E. Gallery, Brussels; Alon Segev Gallery, Tel Aviv; Rothschild 69 project, Tel Aviv; Hangar Bicocca, Milan; The Spaceship on Hayarkon 70, Tel Aviv; and Sommer Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv.

Recent solo exhibitions include Battle Therapy Living Room at the Velan Center for Contemporary Art, Turin; Lived & Laughed & Loved & Left at La Montagne Gallery, Boston, and Accident Nothing at Aran Cravey Gallery, Los Angeles. Recent group exhibition venues include Charlotte Fogh Gallery, Aarhus, DeBuck Gallery, NYC, and Alon Segev Gallery, Tel Aviv, among others.

He held special collaborations with designer Scott Sternberg for the fashion label Band of Outsiders' 2014 Resort Collection and with WPKL on limited edition skateboards.

Future solo exhibitions are planned in Berlin for late spring 2014 and in a two month residency at the prestigious Villa Lena in Italy.

All images photos by: Elad Sarig

Alon Segev Gallery

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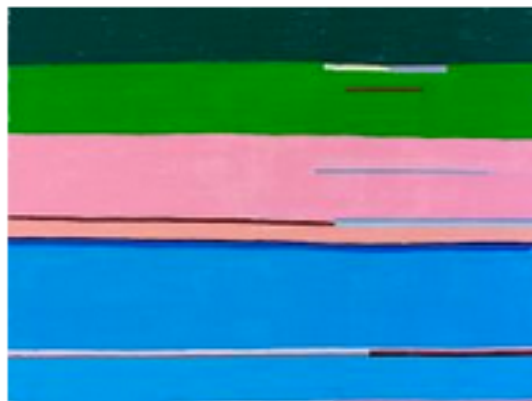
Monday - Thursday from 10am to 6pm
Friday from 10am to 1pm

Related images

1. Guy Yanai, Plant, Banana, and A Painting, 130 x 100 cm
2. Guy Yanai, University, 2014, oil on linen, 130 x 100 cm
3. Guy Yanai, Another Splash but with a Splash II, 2014, oil on linen, 60 x 74 cm
4. Guy yanai, Sardinian Pool, 148 x 120 cm (detail)
5. Guy yanai, Office II, 148 x 120 cm (detail)
6. Guy Yanai, Syracuse Plant and a Picture, 2014, oil on linen, 130 x 100 cm

Published: Tuesday, 25 March 2014

Article by: **WSI Administration**





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Guy Yanai's solo show opens new Aran Cravey gallery in Hollywood

Posted on 1/2/2014 5:11:00 PM by Lyle Zimskind



"I'm Lovin' It (Italy Losing)" by Guy Yanai (2013); oil on linen; 29" x 23.6"

The midfield vantage point on the soccer match in Tel Aviv-based artist Guy Yanai's painting "I'm Lovin' It (Italy Loses)" is an angle instantly familiar from television broadcasts of sporting events. Hardly less prominent than the players or the field, the sideline wall in the background features an all-too-recognizable image of McDonald's Golden Arches and the accompanying slogan "I'm Lovin' It." Though there is a real athletic contest going on (one destined to disappoint any *Gli Azzurri* diehards), the action of the game as presented here gets subsumed by the communications media surrounding it.

The attentive viewer of this work, as well as five of the other 17 oil paintings in Yanai's *Accident Nothing* exhibition at the new Aran Cravey Gallery space in Hollywood, will also notice that these images are hanging sideways.

The White House in Washington D.C., a Stockholm street, the Great Pyramids of Egypt, an Israeli kibbutz's guest quarters, and a Hockney-inspired backyard swimming pool—all of these scenes are rendered, like "I'm Lovin' It," as bright icons of a distant part of the world, each viewable in its rectangular frame as though you're looking through a window or a broadcast screen. Yanai himself, we are informed, painted all these images horizontally from what we might colloquially call a "right side up" perspective. But the pictures were then purposefully turned 90 degrees before they were ready to be displayed to the world.

Half of the works in *Accident Nothing* comprise the series of "Nothing" paintings—nine small, square (non-sideways) tableaux featuring vividly colored geometric shapes, some arranged in representations of simple images like an awning, a cinema projection or a croquet pole while others are expressly abstract. The paintings in this set all radiate a dynamic stillness, suggesting a warm and compelling place distinguished by nothing happening.

Every one of the works on view in *Accident Nothing*, including three large, context-free portraits of trees, features a distinctively striated brushstroke. It's as if the paint had been applied with long parallel strips of tape or a sharp-edged tool. In fact, the highly visible stripes that stretch over long expanses of each painting surface testify to the hypnotic meticulousness of the artist's technique, a contemplative state that anyone encountering these works may get drawn into.



LOS ANGELES

Guy Yanai: "Accident Nothing" at Aran Cravey Gallery

Guy Yanai's first solo exhibition of paintings at the recently relocated Aran Cravey Gallery (now in an expansive Hollywood location) combined traditional and not-so-traditional subject matter with a high-keyed color palette and rhythmic style of brushwork. At first glance, it seemed that Yanai's formal strategies of color and brushwork united a relatively disparate source of imagery: still-lives, residential landscapes, a soccer match, the pyramids of Egypt, and the podium of the US president, which stands empty. A longer look, however, finds a similar mood in each as the Israeli artist seems intent on capturing the easily overlooked, in-between moments that are often lost beneath the surface of the frantic pace of contemporary living.

While the subject matter reaches back to the earliest traditions of Western art, their treatment hearkens to a diverse array of modernist influences. Cézanne in the broken horizon of *Torino*; Edward Hopper meets David Hockney in the lonely vistas of desert suburbia; Pop Art in the commercial icons found in the singular painting with a human presence, *I'm Loving It (Italy Losing)*; and a series of small, square architectural renderings that seems to dwell just outside the neighborhood of Ellsworth Kelly. This series of intimately scaled, cropped views of larger urban settings exude a sense of mystery, leaving the viewer only a small clue from which to envision the rest of the building. These missing bits of information are at once frustrating and engaging,

demanding more from the viewer than the candy-colored scheme first suggests.

Throughout the exhibition, Yanai maintains a hypnotic, rhythmic style of brushwork, pulling richly saturated pigment across the canvas in parallel horizontal paths. Though it must also be noted that a selection of the paintings were hung sideways, causing a slight rift in the viewing experience. This deliberate move reminds the viewer of the mediated experience between the depicted scene and the experience of it. But it is the persistent brushwork, the sense of consistent movement across the canvas—both horizontal and vertical—that creates an underlying sense of anxiety that permeates the overall mood of the exhibition. That initial moment of quiet becomes a pregnant pause, a moment of anticipation, as Yanai subverts the calm and stability associated with the lull of the horizontal line turned here on its head. Instead, we are left to wonder: what will happen next in that empty room, on that soccer field, or when the president next speaks?

—MOLLY ENHOLM

"ANOTHER SPLASH," 2013

Guy Yanai

OIL ON LINEN, 29" x 23½"

PHOTO: COURTESY ARAN CRAVEY GALLERY

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The Tension of Today

Guy Yanai

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Japanese Mountain, 2013, oil on linen, 60 x 60cm.

Interview by Rosecrans Baldwin

Square paintings that take the smallest things—a gas station's roof, a swing set's leg—and find tension in the most cheerful of circumstances.

Guy Yanai's "Lived & Laughed & Loved & Left" is on view at Boston's [La Montagne Gallery](#) through Aug. 28, 2013.

Guy Yanai was born in 1977 in Haifa, Israel. Raised and educated in Boston, New York, and Amherst, he currently lives and works in Tel Aviv. Recent solo exhibitions include *Battle Therapy Living Room* at Rothschild 69 art space, *First We Feel The We Fall* at Alon Segev Gallery, *Four Guys In A Subaru Drinking Grape-juice* at the Spaceship at HaYarkon 70. Recent groups exhibitions include *Domesticated Souls* at A.L.I.C.E Brussels, *Sense of the Mediterranean* at Hangar Bicocca Milan, and *Ashdod Museum of Art*.

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The Morning News: You've said before your paintings begin from photographs. Are you shooting with a smartphone? What grabs your eye?

Guy Yanai: The paintings sometimes begin from photographs, but not just. I use anything that I can get my hands on, and that includes photographs. Sometimes with my iPhone, sometimes just stealing, sometimes from memory, sometimes from looking, sometimes from nothing, sometimes from other art. It's not that important from where, because there are just so many sources of information now. The different layers of cognitive acts do excite me though. I guess I'm looking for something that I can take to a new place, some kind of miraculous transformation. What interest me is what's around us, all of us. To work within the texture of today.

TMN: The paintings are tense—controlled by the dimensions of the canvas. Do they feel tense to you?

GY: Yes. They are very, very tense. I mean, is there a shape that is more authoritative than the square? All the works in this show are square. It just really freezes up everything.

TMN: Are you instinctively better with color or form?

GY: I've never thought about it. I think it varies from painting to painting, and certain paintings demand me to be better at certain things. On second thought, probably color.

TMN: How much television do you watch?

GY: Not much. I would like to watch more, but I don't have time. Sometimes at night I put on Israeli TV and it's really crazy. Mostly, I like mindless TV that just numbs me after working all day. I like cinema, too; in fact I'm very jealous of cinema, and music as well.

TMN: If a man walks into a room, what are you drawn to first?

GY: His whole composure. I'd prefer a woman to walk into a room.

TMN: When was the last time you looked at a piece of art by someone else and were confused?

GY: It's nice to get confused, like, "How the fuck did he do that?" That feeling of bewilderment is great. Last time I felt it? Probably looking at Elad Lassry or Tal R.

TMN: Favorite thing to do in airports?

GY: I travel a lot for shows, usually for short periods of time, so if I can sneak into the lounges I like to drink Campari and eat little snacks, otherwise I look at magazines and all of the shopping—it relaxes me. The worst is just to sit in a horrible chair and wait. So yeah, drink and shop. I like to try the "local" food at airports.

TMN: Do paintings end for you the same way each time?

GY: Never. Every painting defines itself and defines its own parameters. Sometimes I try to make it easy on myself and re-do a painting in a different size, but it never works, it just looks pre-planned and dead. I work in projects, but with each one each work ends at its own tempo.

TMN: James Joyce wrote in *Dubliners*, "I am tomorrow, or some future day, what I establish today. I am today what I established yesterday or some previous day."

GY: Well, as you know, the title of this show in Boston is taken from Joyce's *Finnigan's Wake*. The book itself is totally unreadable—it's really a night in Dublin's dreams, even if he wrote it in Paris. I had a show in 2011, in Tel Aviv, at Alon Segev Gallery, called "First We Feel Then We Fall"—that line is also inspired from *Finnigan's Wake*. Both titles are the same thing really, first living, risking everything, and eventually crashing. That sense of defeat is something that's really been

interesting me lately. How to lose gracefully. How to be down and still be strong in that weakness.

As to your question, I mean, look, what are we doing now? I am talking about a show that's been in the books almost a year, about work that I finished in May. I mean, Joyce is so on here. The full presence of the works here, and the past year are just starting to make themselves felt.

The more you look, the more there is to see

The Boston Globe

By Cate McQuaid | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT JULY 09, 2013

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Like many painters, Israeli artist Guy Yanai uses his own photographs as source material, but his focus, in a show at LaMontagne Gallery, is less the subject of the photo than how camera and computer — and, in turn, paintbrush and the “screen” of the canvas — shape the way we see.

The paintings appear simple, but they’re freighted with subtle complexities. Yanai’s subject matter is often dull: the corner of a canopy at a gas station, a detail of a swing set that doesn’t include the swing. But he paints with sunny, delectable colors. His technique looks painstaking; he renders mostly everything in straight horizontal lines. Yet it’s also cursory; he applies one layer of paint, and he’s done. The almost-mechanical nature of Yanai’s process inevitably emphasizes the imperfection of the artist’s hand, and that, too, creates tension.

The more time you spend with his work, the more there is to see. “Aqua Di Parma/ Void” depicts a door beneath a yellow awning. Yanai’s straight-line painting system lays bare the elements of composition, so representation veers sweetly toward abstraction. Wedges of sunlight and shadow break the wall surrounding the door into shades of gray. The jaunty awning looks built out of angles and blocks of yellow.

“Grass” depicts a woman’s leg and sneaker-shod foot dropping down vertically over a flat passage of green and a stripe of bubblegum pink. Shadows here are solid forms in several shades — a dark arc to the side of the leg houses a triangle of light.

Yanai points out how photographs and video are framed, how a painting is constructed, and how they coalesce into pictures. He often uses his straight lines like pixels, as when he paints the reflection of a sailboat in “Pink Sky at Night.” These days, pictures come at us constantly, and this artist, with his banal subjects, seems to lament the throwaway nature of visual culture. Yet paint can be indelible, and here it translates ordinary scenes into something arresting.



Guy Yanai, “Grass”

GUY YANAI: Lived & Laughed & Loved & Left

LaMontagne Gallery, 555 East Second St.,
South Boston 617-464-4640.

<http://www.lamontagnegallery.com>

Closing date: Aug. 28

The Boston Globe



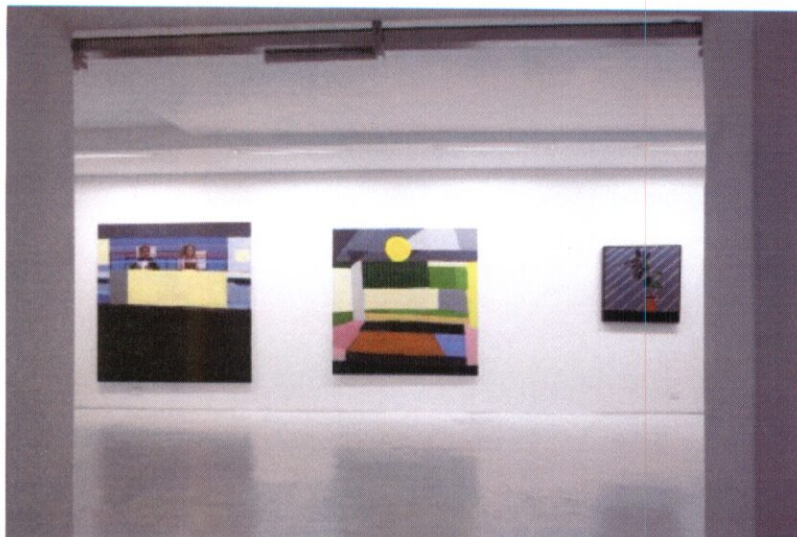
Guy Yanai – Courtesy of the Artist

Conflitto, assenza di comunicazione, cura: in questa mostra si avverte un sottile legame tra i diversi lavori. Quanto c'entra l'elemento biografico? È vero, in questa mostra c'è un legame tra tutti i lavori. Se devo essere sincero, la scelta è stata perlopiù opera della curatrice, Noam Segal, che ha messo insieme i dipinti. A Tel Aviv ne abbiamo esposti solo cinque, mentre a Torino abbiamo aggiunto alcuni lavori precedenti: *Marriage*, *First We Feel Then We Fall* e *The Athlete*. Mi viene sempre chiesto qual è il legame tra *Battle*, *Living Room From The Outside* e *Therapy*. Per me in *Therapy* c'è una sorta di "living" room, in *Living Room From The Outside* una battaglia e in *Battle* molta terapia. Ho dipinto il mio soggiorno dall'esterno perché non so cosa fare in quello spazio, ho dipinto la

stanza dove faccio terapia perché lì non riesco a parlare, ho dipinto il matrimonio perché non avevo idea di come fosse essere sposati. Sono state queste situazioni impossibili a suscitarmi i dipinti.

Nel tuo lavoro solitamente il conflitto è più un dato di partenza che qualcosa di visualizzato. Le tue opere appaiono come delle isolate visioni statiche. In questo caso il conflitto invece viene fuori come dato visivo nel trittico ispirato a Paolo Uccello.

Colpiscono un insolito affollamento e un certo dinamismo. Cos'è cambiato? Hai ragione, di solito i dipinti finiscono con l'essere immagini statiche, qualcosa che non è in movimento. Una sorta di immagine inquieta. È un aspetto su cui rifletto molto mentre lavoro, mentre scelgo cosa dipingere e con quali immagini lavorare. Per quanto riguarda il trittico ispirato a Paolo Uccello, dovevo farlo e basta. Non so davvero perché, sentivo solo di doverlo fare, e quando si è presentata l'occasione l'ho colta al volo. All'inizio volevo semplicemente remixarli in senso musicale, cercare di prendere le distanze e farli miei. Durante il lavoro ho provato molta rabbia per i dipinti, continuavo a notare quanto fossero belli e ho cominciato a capire come lo stesso Paolo Uccello fosse migliorato dal primo all'ultimo. Volevo anche metterli insieme, come sai ogni dipinto del trittico è in una città europea diversa. In ebraico esiste la parola "tikkun", più o meno riparare (il mondo), e io volevo farlo in maniera quasi ingenua. Però hai ragione, nei dipinti c'è una sorta di arrangiamento dei "dati", e in questo senso qui sono stato un compositore.

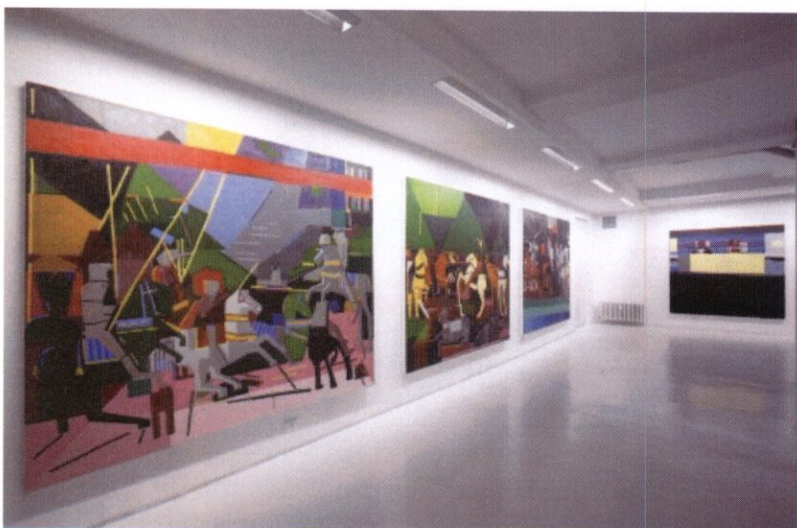


Guy Yanai – *Battle, Therapy, Living Room* – veduta della mostra presso Velan Centro d'Arte Contemporanea, Torino 2013

Stavolta hai scelto un artista del Primo Rinascimento, altre volte compaiono citazioni da artisti contemporanei o designer. Che ruolo riveste la citazione nella tua ricerca artistica? Credo che le citazioni siano un insieme di cose diverse, alcune molto profonde prese dal mondo della musica, altre molto infantili. L'aspetto infantile è estremamente semplice: mi piace qualcosa, mi piace qualcuno, e mi viene il desiderio primitivo di usarlo, di elogiarlo, di riadattarlo, di prenderne le distanze. Diventa una specie di

discendenza orizzontale, con *Jean Prouvé* non è poi tanto diverso che con Paolo Uccello. Il ruolo della citazione, forse, è quello di strumento per avvertire un legame, per non sentirsi troppo soli, per creare un'affinità con la mia famiglia di creatori, forse per costruirmi delle pareti attorno.

Un mondo fatto di oggetti. Il design ha invaso ogni aspetto della vita. Piante, uomini, animali diventano oggetti nelle tue opere, anche attraverso la saturazione dei colori. Nella tua ricerca volta a rinnovare il linguaggio pittorico consideri più importante l'aspetto decorativo o quello strutturale? Nessuno dei due, entrambi e ciascuno di loro preso individualmente. Dipende dal dipinto. *Nuit Banai* ha scritto che le strutture di alcuni miei lavori somigliano alle piante, e io mi ci ritrovo. A volte l'aspetto decorativo di certi lavori serve a nascondere la struttura, a volte la struttura serve a nascondere le decorazioni più piccole. Non c'è un sistema né un'ideologia. Ogni lavoro definisce se stesso.



Guy Yanai – *Battle, Therapy, Living Room* – veduta della mostra presso Velan Centro d'Arte Contemporanea, Torino 2013

Guardare il mondo attraverso una quadrettatura che ricorda l'effetto pixel della computer grafica. Il mondo si è trasformato in immagini che possono generare ulteriori immagini. È il primo passo per ridisegnare le nostre vite? Forse l'uomo non è così diverso da un pezzo d'arredo? Per me si tratta piuttosto di non saper amare. Sono diverso da una sedia? Non lo so. Ogni mattina non so decidere cosa mangiare a colazione, dico sul serio. Tutta questa possibilità di scelta è assurda, e ci tocca trasformarci in assemblatori. Viste le migliaia e migliaia

di immagini, un dipinto deve essere molto consapevole. Detto questo, mi ritengo fortunatissimo di poter lavorare. Credo che quest'epoca storica sia la migliore per l'arte. Forse

tutte le linee dritte e la natura geometrica delle mie opere sono un tentativo di introdurre umanità nei dipinti.

Questa compenetrazione di piani e figure geometriche riflette l'influenza di Paul Klee in lavori come *First We Feel, Then We Fall* o *Battle of San Romano 2*. Consideri Klee una semplice fonte o è più una questione di affinità? In tutta onestà non lo studio da diverso tempo. A diciott'anni ho letto tutti i suoi diari, e sono stati una fonte di ispirazione, i racconti dei suoi viaggi e dell'opera. Anche i quadrati mi hanno influenzato moltissimo.

Le tue pennellate appaiono solide, costruttive. Altre volte si mostrano come segni astratti, bande di colore. A cosa rimandano queste strisce colorate? Questo è un aspetto che mi appassiona molto. Il fatto che la semplice intenzione di una pennellata possa in qualche modo arrivare ai processi mentali di chi guarda. A volte una pennellata è solo una pennellata che non rimanda a niente, altre volte la stessa identica pennellata può descrivere qualcosa, altre ancora può negare qualcosa. Le strisce possono davvero rimandare a tutto ciò che voglio, ed è straordinario perché basta un semplice cambiamento di intenzione per farlo e, in qualche modo, chi guarda lo capisce immediatamente.



Guy Yanai, *Living Room From The outside*, 2012 / *Therapy*, 2012 –
Courtesy Velan Centro d'Arte Contemporanea, Torino

La realtà non rappresenta un unico intero. Contraddizione e ossimoro sono alla base del tuo linguaggio artistico? Senza dubbio. Sono convinto che oggi la pittura debba avere questo aspetto di inconciliabilità. Che la menzogna chiamata pittura debba contenere sette bugie in una. Circa un anno fa ho addirittura curato una mostra intitolata *The Irreconcilable*. Tale negazione, l'essere contemporaneamente questo e quello, mi esalta, lo trovo un aspetto molto speciale della pittura. Contraddirsi di continuo, verificare altre possibilità, è

anche estremamente umano.

La mostra arriva al Centro d'Arte Contemporanea Velan di Torino dalla Kunsthalle Rothschild 69 di Tel Aviv. Ci sono delle differenze tra le due esposizioni? E cosa è cambiato dal punto di vista della ricezione da parte del pubblico? Innanzitutto la mostra di Torino è un po' più grande di quella di Tel Aviv, che esponeva solo cinque dipinti, tutti della stessa dimensione, e quindi aveva un ritmo molto diverso. A Torino il trittico ispirato a Paolo Uccello è appeso su una sola parete ed è straordinario vederlo disposto così. Una delle principali differenze è che in Italia tutti sono cresciuti con Paolo Uccello, per certi versi fa parte del canone nazionale. Ovviamente la comunità artistica di Tel Aviv conosce il trittico, ma molti visitatori non sapevano che si trattasse dell'adattamento di un'opera d'arte del primo Rinascimento, quindi l'hanno osservato con sguardo nuovo, che non è né meglio né peggio, ma è un'esperienza del tutto diversa. Per me è molto importante esporre questo progetto in

Italia.



Guy Yanai, *Battle of San Romano 1, 2, 3, 2012* – Courtesy Velan
Centro d'Arte Contemporanea, Torino

Molti lamentano che proprio in Italia la pittura venga trascurata tra le altre forme d'arte, nonostante l'importante contributo alla storia della pittura. A Tel Aviv, invece? Capisco

perfettamente perché la pittura venga trascurata in Italia, la sua storia può essere un pesante fardello da portare. Dev'essere molto difficile dipingere in Italia, addirittura quasi un atto di estremismo. E con la storia del movimento dell'Arte Povera, credo che per molti artisti abbia più senso non dipingere in Italia adesso. È strano, perché per me è una terra molto

sensuale, un luogo che trasuda estetica. Visto che in Italia non si espone molta pittura, poter esibire il mio progetto a Torino mi ha esaltato ancora di più. A Tel Aviv abbiamo a malapena una "storia", quindi c'è un senso di libertà totale. Anche se ci sono molti artisti, la pittura non è in primo piano. Prevalgono video e installazioni. Per molto tempo ogni dipinto che creavo doveva giustificarsi come entità "legittima". La pittura doveva farsi valere tra video, performance, time-based art e così via. Per certi versi ero molto invidioso di tutti gli altri mezzi artistici. Quando applico a una superficie pigmenti mescolati nell'olio mi sento molto primitivo. Come il bambino nell'angolo con cui nessuno vuole giocare. Negli ultimi tre anni tutto questo è cambiato. Niente può sostituire la pittura, e più il mondo cambia, più la pittura diventa importante come mezzo per esprimere l'esperienza e l'apparenza della nostra vita.

Per concludere, qual è l'artista italiano che preferisci? Difficile rispondere a questa domanda. Forse Piero della Francesca. Io adoro tutti. Cy Twombly ha vissuto tutta la vita in Italia, vale come italiano?

Antonella Palladino