



October, 2013

Narrative Mode: Jane Fox Hipple at DODGEgallery

*Contemporary abstraction aficionados: inhale a collective breath of joy when experiencing Jane Fox Hipple's (NAP #92) return to DODGEgallery on New York's Lower East Side. Then take out your notebooks. Hipple further contorts and pushes the limits of painting and total composition across a dynamic dialogue fittingly titled *Corresponding Selves*.*

-Fee, Brian

Start with *to the test of herself*, its title imbuing a charged potentiality not unlike a James Joyce line. This smallish gypsum-coated board shadows a Allan McCollum "surrogate", yet there's this nagging painted canvas bit hanging off the bottom left corner. Its neighbor *holder/held* is almost double in scale, and it appears as though Hipple attached a paint-soaked cotton tarp to a bare canvas, then flipped the work to face the wall, concealing much of the action beyond the wrapped and billowing fabric encroaching over the frame's boundary. Roles are reversed, as the soft cotton overruns and "holds" the traditional structural backing.

Facing this is a quartet of similarly scaled paintings that offer a concise rubric of Hipple's exploration of materiality, specifically: adapting and circumventing structural parameters and introducing odd or commonly hidden objects to the picture plane. *Epilogue A* and the epically titled *Queen of nonsuch, or the False Self* bookend the foursome, enhanced by accumulated cotton canvas draped behind the main compositions — remnants and visual histories of Hipple's studio practice. *Epilogue A* incorporates a "readymade" waxy gypsum board, practically featureless beyond a decisive slashing intervention across its middle, over a sedate, brushy riff on color-field and hardedge painting (somehow she channels both of these ostensibly opposing forces at once). To its left is *Overview*, stippled by plaster chunks (mirrored in the paper collage across *Queen of nonsuch...*), frozen in a struggle with its unfurling polyester backing. A good chunk of *stript's* upper left side is completely missing, so Hipple painted the exposed stretcher frame, which asserts itself across the greater composition like a leaf rubbing. Five screws reemphasize the frame while acting as central optical points. It is a visual workout, to be sure, but the similar scales and serial hanging emphasizes overall coherence and encourages deeper readings.

Wall-mates *uncomfortable fun* and *self-written (P.S.)* play with observed and actual depth, the former executed on a thick (almost cinderblock-like) wood panel, tricked out by an eye-catching nail protruding from the composition's navel, the latter a wrapper of hot-pink acrylic and motley-hued black shaped over and out from the wood's rectangularity.



Jane Fox Hipple | holder/held, 2013, acrylic on cotton and canvas, 49 x 29 x 5 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and DODGE-gallery, NY.



Jane Fox Hipple | Corresponding Selves, installation view. Photo by Jason Mandella. Image courtesy of the artist and DODGEgallery, NY.

Hipple stretches relationships furthest with a duo of two-part works, including *always on the lookout & Honeyptot*, positioned near the back of the main gallery. How do we read it? The oversized, stretched canvas, roughly stapled to a wooden frame and reversed to the wall, plays the recurring compositional stand-in. Beyond a few vague brushstrokes and a chunk of charcoal-like wood affixed dead-center on the canvas, much of the media is relegated to glossy pellets in the bowl (*Honeyptot*), like a painterly poltergeist expelled them from the canvas. Either that, or we're seeing a work-in-frozen-progress, the pellets becoming the wooden "accumulation" on canvas, only to later be spread around or brushed on as a conventional painting. That daub of cream-colored acrylic on the bowl's edge further alludes to the artist's hand, either a sign of completion or prelude to action. It's a vibrant composition, and it hints at the notion that Hipple's dialogue, on abstraction and the whole act of painting, is far from over.