

TWO COATS OF PAINT

Award-winning blogazine, primarily about painting

GROUP SHOWS

Non-intent, or, questioning the tyranny of curatorial premise, at Osmos



Jude Tallichet, installation at Osmos

Contributed by Tom McGlynn

Totalizing themes have come to condition everyday social relations largely due to an inescapable sense of contemporary interconnectedness. With Mobius-strip news cycles and continuous “chat” ever rattling, propulsively glancing interaction has supplanted effective back-and-forth. In this light, McLuhan’s famous koan “the medium is the message” wasn’t meant so much as a celebration of the electronic global village as it was a warning against the communication-occluding nature of its undifferentiated membership. For artists the price of admission can be prohibitive, as lateral thinking tends to chafe against fitting in. “Mind the Gaps” at the Osmos space on East 1st Street takes as its curatorial premise that *it has no consistent curatorial premise* and so offers a welcome respite to the incessant connecting of dots of contemporary life. The curatorial statement of non-intent leaves viewers to “puzzle out their own version of coherence.”



“Mind the Gaps” at Osmos. Installation view.

The gemütlich ground floor environment of Osmos is conducive to a congenial gathering of disparate artistic temperaments. Perhaps its historic function as a turn-of-the-century saloon run by German immigrant Justus H. Schwab (where anarchist radicals such as Emma Goldman once congregated) has suffused its rooms with an aura of independent thinking. A selection of paintings by **Larry Greenberg**, **Michelle Araujo** and **Adam Simon** occupies the right-hand wall while the sculptures of **William Stone** and **Jude Tallichet** inhabit the wall and floor opposite.



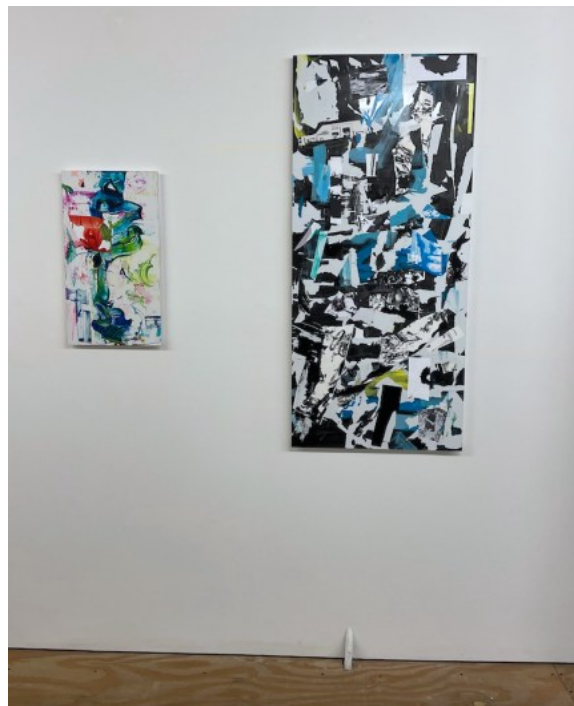
Adam Simon, *Walmart/Laptop/Homeowners*, 2021, acrylic on canvas on panel, 35 x 28 inches

Greenberg’s paintings, such as *Almost There* (2021), are the most quietist and austere of the group, composed of subtly shifting planes of whites, blues, and greys that channel **American Precisionist** painting but also the slipping windows on computer screens, invoking their very blankness. An eye-rest from too much information?



Larry Greenberg, installation view

One of Michele Araujo's vertical compositions on aluminum, *Untitled* (2021), is made of fragments of wallpaper, documentary photos and portions of her own face interspersed with intense, dye-like paint swaths. Her aleatory shredding and recombination of disparate appropriated images has the effect of immersing the viewer in an alternatively rising or falling slipstream of data. And there is a dreamlike quality to the assimilative tone of the collage elements which tracks surreal. This is all-over painting reimagined as a vehicle for a mediumistic message.



Michele Araujo

Adam Simon has devoted significant study to detaching commercial logos and stock photographic images from their original function and then deploying the floating signifiers to nail down an idea of contemporary abstract painting. In *Walmart/Laptop/Homeowners* (2021), the big-box store's asterisk-like logo is superimposed with

anonymized stock images of three figures waving and reading. These elements are then formally organized in vertical bands of yellow, blue, and red in which the light and dark values of the interspersed images exaggerate their dependent transparency, as if the ideal will of the “stock” participant is to spiritually merge with the commercial utopia that Walmart represents. Simon thereby reveals consumers’ blithe disbelief in their own commercial immolation, while transparently enacting his own complicity in the commodification of contemporary abstract painting.



William Stone



William Stone

The sculpture in the show, in contrast to the paintings, evinces a slower and perhaps more Luddite approach to post-postmodern consistency. Sculpture, of course, has traditionally asked for more time to assimilate its three-dimensionality. Jude Tallichet and William Stone hew close to traditional assumptions while also challenging any easy nostalgia for them. Tallichet offers a series of different sizes and types of clothing cast in bronze and strewn across the gallery floor. When such items are cast in an historically overdetermined art material, the artist's abject and everyday subject matter, as in *Dropped Sock* (2012), an evacuated, wraith-like contemporary existence is memorialized.

Stone presents a fabrication of an ersatz grandfather clock and a hypertrophic tree bark souvenir. Each are impeccably crafted in wood and found objects, both mechanical and organic. These works resonate wistfulness for the tactile and handmade sensual in both their anecdotal and their abstract qualities. The grandfather clock's face is a literal projection of a pocket watch held below and in front of its cabinet while *Skin* (2018) presents a chunk of thickly laminated plywood faced with an actual tree bark cladding. Both works revel in the conceit of their artifice while simultaneously sounding elegiac notes.

Mind The Gaps co-curators Adam Simon and Cay Sophie Rabinowitz set out to get lost in forking paths of associative rather than denotative meanings with this show. What their errant combination ultimately reveals, however, is that these artists have a lot more in common than any curatorial imperative might impose. Their commonality exists in that there are more figurative gaps within each of their artworks than between them. Such connotative faults lend sympatico breadth to the relentless consistency of our contemporary social compact. Maybe the affective author isn't dead, but just on an extended gap year.

“Mind The Gaps,” co-curated by Adam Simon and Cay Sophie Rabinowitz. Artists include Michelle Araujo, Larry Greenberg, Adam Simon, William Stone, and Jude Tallichet. Osmos Gallery, 50 West 1st Street, East Village, New York, NY. March–April 2022.

About the author: **Tom McGlynn** is an artist and writer based in the NYC area. His work is represented in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum, The Museum of Modern Art, and The Cooper- Hewitt National Design Museum of the Smithsonian among other national and international collections. He is currently an editor at large at *The Brooklyn Rail*.

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