

cynthia byrnes
contemporary art

Dana Saulnier
Artist Statement

My images evolve from overlapping sets of drawings and studies in oil. The process continuously demonstrates that seeing is selective and is always accompanied by 'blindness'. As the images evolve they keep dividing into different potentials for vision. These dividing potentials seem endless and lead to new works. Paradoxically, this plenitude of seeing is also experienced by me as many moments of 'not yet seeing' the image. Hence, I experience a lot of 'not seeing' as I work out my vision. This dialogue between vision and blindness gets cooked into my images. They are evocative and poetic images because they are perceptually 'fragile' and multiple. I want both perceptual and categorical modes of reception to be present but to always be changeable and alive.

The nominal subject of the work is 'the figure in landscape', yet these body-like forms are better understood as events evoking our transience and uncertainty. The sense of encompassing time -- the form, space, and light in paintings of the figure in landscape, sustain themes of tragedy and comedy that are repeating projects in the history of art. We are historical beings and living emotionally is a condition of our being. We know that those who lived before us also lived this condition. And, we hope that our emotional lives will somehow connect with the lives of those who will follow us. My dialogue with historical paintings locates both my connection to the past and my distance from the past. The distance is crucial to my work. I want to paint the differential as forward momentum and endeavor to make new singular images.

Painting keeps teaching me new ways to sense and think. Paradoxes abound and lead to endless discussion. Yet painting lives best when it devours our attempts to theorize. I seek to make works that are absolutely specific while being productively resistant to analysis.

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