

TWO COATS OF PAINT

Award-winning blogazine, primarily about painting

NY Times Art in Review: Paschke, Hafif

March 26, 2010 4:57 pm



Ed Paschke at Gagosian, installation view.

“[Ed Paschke](#),” curated by his former studio assistant Jeff Koons. Gagosian Gallery, New York, NY. Through April 24. [Ken Johnson reports](#): Imagine a phosphorescent underground peopled by pimps, strippers, hustlers, wrestlers, fetishists and other lavishly accessorized miscreants from the lower depths of American society. Though clearly derived from photographic sources, Mr. Paschke’s portraits of such outsider luminaries are simplified, irradiated from within and cast in sickly colors, as if he’d envisioned them in fever dreams. In the late ’80s Mr. Paschke began painting images that looked as if they were broadcast by a television on acid, with lines of neon-bright visual static coursing over the ghostly heads of vaguely menacing men. Few painters have captured the shifty, electric spirit of postindustrial capitalism so vividly.



Marcia Hafif, "Black Painting: Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Umber II," 1979-80, oil on canvas, 215 x 200 cm.

"Marcia Hafif: From the Inventory: Black Paintings, 1979-1980," Newman Popiashvili Gallery, Chelsea. Through April 3. **Roberta Smith reports:** As usual Hafif simply wanted to put brush to canvas, leaving a certain mark in a certain color and proceeding from one stroke to the next, beside or over its predecessor, until the entire surface was covered to her liking, in a process both devotional and workmanlike. The colors she used here include the darkest of ultramarine blues and burnt umbers applied in loose, substantial strokes that give the surfaces a feathery softness. Each of the four paintings here, all measuring 7 feet by 6 \times feet, has its own qualities of tone and texture, nearness and farness, like various night skies. Their differences, while subtle, emerge without undue taxation and with a deeply characteristic Hafifian earnestness that seems to say: Just do it and mean it; it will be new enough.