

Play

Marco Tagliaferro

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Monica De Cardenas, Milan

Jackie Wullschlager wrote in the *Financial Times* (Nov. 2008): “For the generation of artists coming of age now, the decision to become a painter is no less serious or ambitious than it ever was, but it is more fraught with complications...” These words were printed in the press release of the group show “Play,” curated by Nikola Cernetic at Monica De Cardenas gallery. In fact, the exhibition was prompted by this quote.



Dan Attoe, *The Scrape*, 2009, oil on panel cm 61 x 91, Courtesy Galleria Monica De Cardenas, Milano;
Friedrich Kunath, *Untitled*, 2007, Acrylic and lacquer on canvas, cm 135 x 85, Courtesy Galleria Monica De Cardenas, Milano.

The statement by Wullschlager, however, is not about a difficult enjoyment of the medium — in relation to the professional contemporary art audience and, as we have become accustomed to in Italy, the 10-year distrust of painting — but is about the need to have a steady and active comparison with other media and above all with the virtuosity of digital and technological sophistication. The data processing hypertext could be for many ‘painters’ an important point of reference for an innovative method that could link quotations from everyday culture with references from animation or alternative visual design, without losing the thread that links painting to its history. Jackie Wullschlager ventures a hypothesis regarding the distinguishing marks of the new way of painting: “Surfaces are dizzying, busy. References are sophisticated, historically astute, laced with humor.”



Michael Cline, *Measurement*, 2009, oil on canvas, cm 86,5 x 86,5 Courtesy Galleria Monica De Cardenas, Milano;
Kristine Moran, *The Lion and The Unicorn*, 2009, oil on panel, cm 106,7 x 137 / inch. 42 x 54, Courtesy Galleria Monica De Cardenas, Milano.

Cernetic takes up his work, which started with the show "Poker" (also exhibited at Monica De Cardenas in 2007), by interpreting these polysemous paintings as unusual matches between contrasting instincts. Dan Attoe's noir meets Michael Cline's oppressive atmospheres, and both could be passed through by Friedrich Kunath's lost characters, guilty of awful deeds and deep damnation in the manner of Kristine Moran. This show has been conceived as an anti-narrative route, in a David Lynch style, where each painting coincides with a sequence, each pictorial gesture with a frame, following a scheme shown by Amy Bessone's paintings and through her effective synthetic idea of 'painting within sculpture' and of 'painting within painting.'
(Translated from Italian by Francesca Mila Nemni)



Helen Verhoeven, Event One-Detail 15 (far right),
2008, oil on canvas. cm 116,8 x 152,4 Courtesy
Galleria Monica De Cardenas, Milano.