

CRITICS' PICKS TORONTO

## Kristine Moran

Daniel Faria Gallery

 Daniel Faria Gallery  
 188 St Helens Avenue

October 26, 2012 - November 24, 2012

By William Ganis ☞



Kristine Moran, *The bride's last encounter with her lovers*, 2012, oil on canvas, 48 x 84".

Kristine Moran departs from her more representational work of recent years in her latest solo exhibition, which comprises nine polymorphic oil works painted in 2012. Bits of illusionistic architecture and landscape nevertheless remain present to set up ambiguous dimensionalities. Despite a preponderance of nonobjectivity, these works' hard edges, thick paint, and high-key hues create, as in the lens of a microscope, shallow depths of field with sharp foregrounded elements. Washes, blends, and muted tones diffuse into unfocused atmospheric backgrounds. Through contrasts, such as those observed in *Lilies in Midnight*, Moran heightens the perceptual effects of her illusory optics.

Much like the exhibition's title, "Between Life and Death," titles of paintings such as *Wormhole* and *Crossing Over* bespeak a motion between states—Moran even references Duchampian alchemy with *The Bride's Last Encounter with Her Lovers*. The evoked transformations

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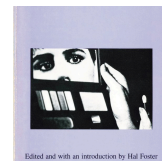
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Edited and with an introduction by Hal Foster

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of state point to indeterminacies that can activate the viewing experience. Moran puts her painterly rabbit/ducks in a row using strategies that include palpable marks made illusive through modeling, and both real and suggested transparencies. Throughout this group of works, acute pigments nonetheless imply representation—for instance, unadulterated blue-green phthalocyanine passages, whether planar or biomorphic, unfailingly conjure foliage.

Moran's visually and materially rich spaces maintain engagement through their ambiguous sensuality; they reward intensive looking. The variety of marks may seem chaotic at first, but through chromatic and spatial relationships the gestures, veils, and swaths settle into compositional harmony. Moran demonstrates her considerable abilities in the works' topmost strokes, with their blends, redirections, and folded planes. Risking undesirable accidents atop other skillfully executed segments, these painterly commitments evidence control and confidence.

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