



Conner, Jill. "Freeze Frame," *ArtUS*, Issue 22, Spring 2008.

While the American election process has bypassed or absorbed mainstream feminism, the old saw of women's issues can still be seen in the New York art world. "WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution," which showed last year at MOCA in Los Angeles, just opened at P.S.1 in Queens, and the Bronx Museum is hosting Carey Lovelace's significant survey of collaborative feminist art. The Bowery's Thrust Projects launched a small prelude to these two recent exhibitions by showcasing a selection of women's abstract paintings as evidence of wide-ranging processes and gestural effects.

Intended to capture the moment in abstraction before a dominant style forms, much of "Freeze Frame" (curated by Elizabeth Cooper, one of the eight contributing artists) carries a hint of déjà-vu. Lisa Hamilton's large *Butterknife* (2007), for instance, features an overlay of colors on flat canvas displaying a similar aesthetic to Lynda Benglis's familiar pigmented latex pour paintings of the late 1960s. The sheer intensity coursing through Elizabeth Cooper's *Untitled (Orange Yellow)* (2007) and Alisa Margolis's *Victoria Park* (2007) also finds an echo in Joan Mitchell's emotionally charged abstractions from the 1980s.

Veronica Tyson-Strait's untitled masonite acrylics, offering the visual metaphor of woven thread, seek to mark out the painting field by a constant buildup and interlacing of colored lines. Borrowing from the techniques and motifs of street culture, however, the works of Wendy White, Jasmine Justice, Joyce Kim, and Carrie Moyer seem marginally more relevant. Moyer's *Green Sap* (2007) stands out for its warped depiction of concession stand hot dogs, while Kim's *The Samurai Lesson* (2007) portrays stick figures ambling behind the big stick. These small generic border crossings seem somehow reconciled in White's *Block from Smack* (2007), which mixes spray paint, acrylic, metal, foam, and an urban sensibility on canvas. *Skyline* (2007), by Jasmine Justice, constructs a view of the tall buildings outside constructing the piecemeal view of the sky.

As abstractions uncompromised by mixed media and cross disciplines, these works don't take stock of the new. The women-only policy is another inclusion illusion that cannot begin to catch up with the exclusion of women artists from the receiving lines of art journalism. A far more insider strategy is required to make a difference here. A good example of this approach was provided by last year's "Global Feminisms" at Brooklyn Museum's new Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art, which, among other novelties, successively brought Judy Chicago's once-controversial sculpture *The Dinner Party* (1974-79) back into the main arena of contemporary art and art history.