



Eric Niebuhr has this ability to sneak things back into being. His paintings rely on our capacity to recall moments as they move in and out of awareness via the constant stream of images and media that provide our information. This is because we have seen them all before... maybe not individually, but surely by now we understand the language. In print and online, in video and on TV, each photographic item is immediately replaced by another. Events have become items. Everything has to be sold. Through this dense screen of media and image saturation encountered each day, surely something, a remnant of that data, must remain.

It is in these remnants that Eric seeks to bring an image back into being. By reducing these media images pictorially, only parts of the original remain. However, through prolonged engagement with his paintings, everything appears intact as if a fragment, bite, or detail can be evidence of the whole.

Eric invites this prolonged engagement through paint: luscious chromatic spaces, organic pools of rich hues; the aesthetic allure of formal and abstract beauty. These are important to Eric as he sees the process of painting as the "work"; he enjoys the dialogue with its history, its material and its language. I understand it as his ruse. It is Eric's touch that invites the viewer in, in through the surface, and maybe no further. But I imagine him inviting you to go beyond the formal itself and to recognize, somewhere, the vast well that forms his initial source.

It is not there in a glance, but sitting somewhere just beyond.

Justin Balmain 2011

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