

Laura Owens, *New Paintings*

Gavin Brown's Enterprise
620 Greenwich Street, 212-627-5258
Greenwich Village
December 1, 2006 - January 13, 2007
Reception: Thursday, November 30, 6 - 8 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

For this new body of work, I decided to move back to Ohio. I recently renovated my parents' garage and have been working in this new and also very old context. I grew up here and hadn't been back for any length of time since I was a teenager. It's been interesting. Election season, and Ohio suddenly feels like the center of the world.... I thought I had escaped, not so!

I was really disappointed to find out the Cleveland Art Museum would not be open until 2011! They have traveling blockbuster shows in one part of the museum; but it is really nothing compared to the quantity and quality of their permanent collection. I made a concerted effort to try to find the location of the grocery store owned by my great grandparents, who were Bohemian and lived in Newburgh Heights, or Little Bohemia. I didn't find it (yet); but I did find the Bohemian National Hall and Cultural Museum.

As far as the work goes, in some ways it's all over the place. In other ways its getting more unified.... For instance, recently I have been paying a particular amount of attention to the edges of the canvas. Trying to get it to recede just a touch within the canvas through the way it is primed and also delineating other rectangular shapes within the canvas to make additional edges. So it gives me more chances to cross the edges because in some cases there are two or three manufactured edges as well as the actual edge. I think this allows for more ways to talk about the space in the painting and three-dimensional space or actual space.

Just saw a picture of Lichtenstein's *Perfect/Imperfect* paintings and this really resonated with me, his use of edges. although his seem more intentionally humorous. In general I think the way I am working in many of the paintings comes out of a long term relationship I have in looking at Matisse... and more recently, the Matisse's I saw at the Barnes collection a number of years ago... their surfaces, the drawing and the space, the triptych and the way the canvases relate... etc. In many ways I have been consciously trying to do this since around 2003; but I think its only now I am really "getting it" in any real way.

I also had been a real nut for Marie Laurencin when I was in college. I just bought a catalogue of hers. In many ways her paintings always fuzz out around the edges or create a lot of inner edges that are fuzzy and shifting. Sort of the opposite of Matisse in terms of structure, but similar in some ways to what I am thinking about.

So anyway with the idea of edges....

I also wanted to play around with the edges of the gallery. Where the work is in the gallery, thinking about the different spaces. Waking up some spaces, putting other spaces to sleep. This will be determined by the installation, and so it's sort of a whole lot of b.s. to tell you how it's working in a press release....

Also with the edges of the show... hoping to leave up some of Jenny's work... bring in some of Rob's... sort of to soften the edges of the show (in terms of time)... To not erase and break completely, but to get more close to what I see as reality... not cut nice and clean, but quite messy and grey.

So in this way I continue on with some sort of oblique collaborations. Edgar Bryan was asked to make the ad... recalling his years as an Air Force graphic designer. Also, I will be continuing the Faith/Failure continuum. A piece originated by Mungo Thomson, then remade by Florian Maier-Aichen, and then by Karl Haendel... I hope to take the piece out of the world of black and white... into the world of color, out of the world of paper, into the world of linen; and for the first time the piece will be made by a woman. Other collaborations will be included, some more obvious and some less obvious... but this is just to point out that the edges of my authorship are messy.

Go Bucks! Laura Owens