

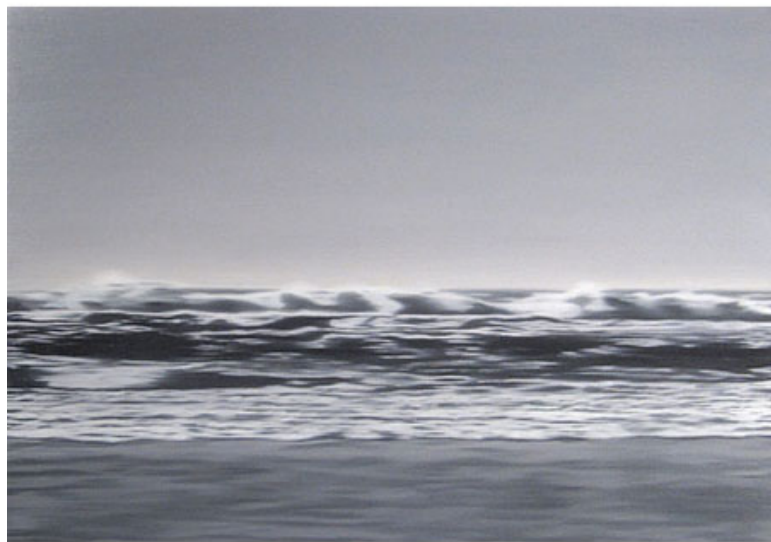


Editorial: Recommendations

Douglas Leon Cartmel

at **Marty Walker Gallery**, Dallas, Texas

Recommendation by Charissa Terranova



'Super Nature (L.A. 1.1),' 2010, Oil on walnut block, 8 x 12 x 1.75''

Continuing through June 12, 2010

The *fil rouge*, or better yet, the *fil gris*, connecting the figural to the abstract in the paintings of Douglas Leon Cartmel is his penchant for grisaille, i.e., the convention of modeling form in two-dimensional space through shades of gray. Working within the broad spectrum of gray - from dark blue-gray to steel-gray-white - Cartmel experiments with space, rendering it in three dimensions as so many clipped shoreline views and exploring it in the non-objective realm of painting qua painting, color qua color.

"Super Nature (L.A. 1.1.)," one of a series of four, is both object and painting. It is a small depiction of a beach in oil paint on a block of walnut. Bearing a contradiction of openness and opacity, the space is at once luminous and crowded. Striations of dark gray in the foreground give way to bubbly laminations in white-grey in the background as sand becomes frothy ocean. Then a line of electric white light diminishes into a block of grey sky. The tight painterly surface transfigures into a sense of objecthood as the landscape wraps around the edges of the small wooden block, making the painting's flatness into a three-dimensional thing that sits on the wall.

"Untitled (Pacifica)" is a large Agnes Martin-esque grid of blocks in shades of grey. The painting goes from dark to light grey with the bottom row of blocks rendered in dark grey, the same shade of the first row up top. There is a similar op-art inspired play of form and color in "Orb 1.1" and "Orb 1.2," two immaculate titanium surfaces in fields of grey with a luminous white orb at the center. The circular brushstrokes of the orb counter the horizontal strokes of Cartmel's gesso of rabbit skin and marble dust which functions as a varnish on top. The strength of this work is its quiet cleverness and lapidary presence. They are pretty objects with subtle intentions and no humor.