

BRIDGETTE MAYER GALLERY

TITLE MAGAZINE

One Big Love by Leslie Wayne - May 2 – May 26, 2012

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By Marcelino Stuhmer

In addition to Leslie Wayne's work at Bridgette Mayer Gallery is an exhibition of New Works by Neil Anderson and paintings by Matthew Fischer.



Whether ironic or sentimental, silly or heart wrenching, Leslie Wayne's new series of small 10 X 13 inch works on shaped panels deserve close attention. She doesn't really paint so much as fold and twist thick pastes of oil paint to explore the materiality and processes of the medium in relationship to natural and sculptural forces. The work displays a playful poetics of unconscious fears and desires. Wayne creates an uncanny interpretive relationship between inextricable performances of material on shaped surfaces, the objects of painting and the paintings' objecthood, and between the artwork and the viewer.

Leslie Wayne's paintings reference German and American Pop paintings by Gerhard Richter in *One Big Love* #58, and Claus Oldenburg in *One Big Love* #52. In front of #52 my first reaction was smiles and laughter. The shaped panel looks like a piece of bread perfectly spread with peanut butter. On the top half is a thick, wrinkled spread of what looks like a delicious combination of strawberry jam and cream cheese. However, the pink-red is meticulously folded and choreographed in different widths to remind me that it is indeed paint and not especially edible.

Wayne's works hinge on quotation as well as sculptural and color suggestion, and thus provoke layered interpretation. *One Big Love* #58 appears both melancholic and celebratory: on the left third of the painting surface are thick gray slabs of oil paint mixed with hints of yellow ochre, creating odd greens. On the right side, in clear reference to Gerhard Richter's enormous squeegee paintings, is a thick, rich, ultramarine turquoise blue undercoat, spread with white paint using a squeegee or palette knife. The gorgeous horizontal white-gray-azure with windows of the purest blue shifts spatially to the left, colliding with the gray slabs to create ripples and waves off the surface of the painting and natural crevices in between. This painting is poetic, dark, and romantic in the Caspar David Friedrich tradition: anxious and steeped in the history and loss of producing something real and natural in the studio process.

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