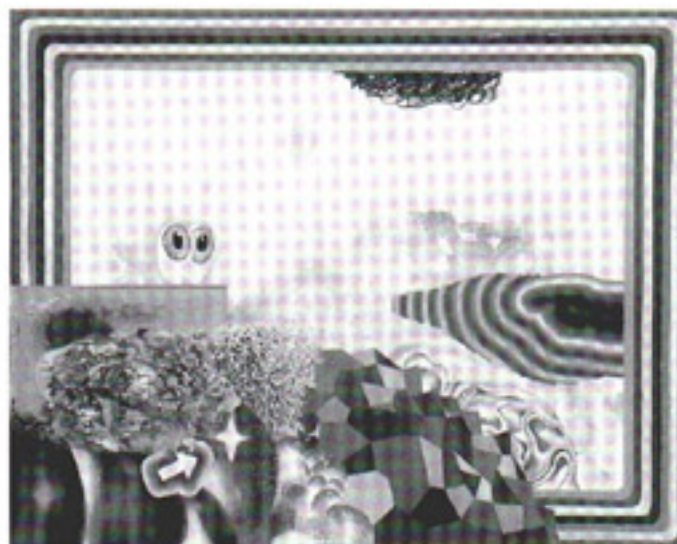


Shirazeh Houshiary, *Iota*, 2003.
Aquacryl and ink on canvas, 19" x 19".



David Dupuis, *Always Jones'n*, 2003.
oil on canvas, 16 x 20".

caught up in its frenzy of nationalism, celebrity, and commerce. If these are one-liners, they're amiably delivered, and we're glad that someone has made the point.

Moore was a talented miniaturist, as is evidenced in many of the works (especially those made just before his death) that explicitly address the impact of bio-engineering. The double helix recurs, hovering in the artist's vision like those strands of protein that bob in our ocular fluid. In *Study for Black Pillow II*, 2002, we see an giant agribusiness under a sky full of chemical symbols and ears of corn with computer keyboards for kernels: No landscape or life-form is unaffected by chemical or genetic meddling.

Moore painted *Farewell*, 1989, as a response to the news that he and his partner had been diagnosed as HIV-positive. In the foreground, two trembling flowers, a terrified glass eyeball in the center of each, are about to be snipped by garden shears; visible through a window behind them is a barren expanse of tree stumps and mucky sky. Moore recognized a link between the destruction of the natural environment and the peril to his own life. Such epic loss he mourned with savage humor, that second sight which remains the outcast's gift and only revenge.

—Tom Breidenbach

SHIRAZEH HOUSHIARY

LEHMANN MAUPIN

Poised between aestheticism and asceticism, Shirazeh Houshiary's delicate, elusive new canvases are marvels of formal restraint and rigor that manage to generate extravagantly seductive per-

ceptual effects. Her recent show—dominated by a suite of large-scale black or white monochromes illuminated with feathery passages of contrasting pen or pencil—is evidence of progress in a conceptual program the artist once characterized as following a trajectory "from form to formlessness."

The Iranian-born, London-based Houshiary is usually associated with the British "New Object" sculptors (including Tony Cragg, Richard Deacon, and Anish Kapoor) with whom she emerged during the '80s. Yet over the last decade, she has increasingly shifted from three-dimensional, floor-based work—minimalist geometric forms suggestive of both honeycombed organic structures and the mathematical proliferations of Islamic decorative motifs—toward two-dimensional wall-based pieces whose light touch and indeterminate surfaces can evoke the subtle opticality of Robert Irwin's early ovoids.

Throughout her career, Houshiary has often located her practice within the context of her Sufi beliefs—her previous New York solo exhibition featured paintings covered with sacred incantations rendered in fine Arabic calligraphy. As with other artists' work that engages issues of faith, Houshiary's is vulnerable to the kind of readings where the complex social and philosophical histories of specific religions are glossed in favor of easily digestible, generalized rhetoric around "the spiritual." The gallery announcement for the recent show, for instance, tritely describes Houshiary's process as a "slow dance around the canvas," with which she engages "by bending into it as if in prayer." Such treatments have more than a whiff of exoticizing

hokum about them and do no favors for a strong and serious practice.

A group of small, untitled mixed-media works on paper (all works 2003) explore basic issues of painting and draftsmanship: figure/ground relationships, compositional rhythms, even moments of lambent near color. Yet her large canvases, with their serene white or black Aquacryl grounds, strive to avoid becoming fully either paintings or drawings, referencing the artist's roots in sculpture by seeking an emphatic objecthood of their own. While her black pieces can resolve more readily into the figurative—the band of graceful white ticking bisecting *Outside In* reads like an infrared horizon; the nebulous halo of *Iota* suggests the galactic—Houshiary's white canvases remain abstract, achieving an immersive immateriality that in certain cases produces cognitive destabilizations that border on the mystical. On one gallery visit, I saw a man physically restrain a companion about to actually fall into the seductive alabaster expanse of the six-by-six-foot *Deep Sleep*; a few moments later, drawing close to examine the minute graphite cross-hatchings that form a phantom triangle at the center of *Gaze*, I nearly toppled into its pearly plane myself as the painting's edge appeared to melt and spread, merge with the wall, and swallow the room and everything in it.

Given such profound sensory pleasures, it's surprising to find *Breath*, the artist's first video project, so self-conscious and listless. On four small, dark screens set in wall recesses, an animated blossom of white appears and disappears in respiratory rhythm; each has its own sound track, ranging from Buddhist liturgical music to a vocal invocation by Hildegard von Bingen,

the twelfth-century German nun now best known for her work's ubiquity on relaxation compilations. Though the atmospheric lighting, lulling sounds, and calming video cadences would seem to represent an attempt at a kind of Sensurround version of Houshiary's work, it ends up feeling like a wan simulation of the ecstatic moments to which her best pieces aspire, in which elemental perceptual experience flowers into a truly numinous state.

—Jeffrey Kastner

DAVID DUPUIS

DEREK ELLER GALLERY

David Dupuis is best known for works on paper that employ monotype, ink, colored pencil, and graphite to create sensuous, gleaming, biomorphic abstractions that look more carved than drawn. After a fifteen-year hiatus, however, the artist has returned to oil, and although his penchant for undulating or radiating stripes has carried over from the works on paper (eight of which were also on view in a separate gallery), a sense of the fresh, the odd, and the mind-bendingly mysterious was evident in this exhibition's nine new paintings.

In *Doubt Collecting* (all works 2003), a disembodied hand with a pointed index finger (like a piece of clip art) seems to send a lighting bolt across the painting to another disembodied hand brandishing a crucifix. Left of center, a blue crystalline mass encrusts a hill of brownish but also pink, blue, and green strokes of paint, which dissipate on the right into dense constellations of dots. A gorgeously glowing pink mist drifts over the hill under a gray and yellow sky whose soft smokiness is abruptly cut off by a razor-sharp horizon line. It's as if a range of forces and effects—of paint, nature, and religion—are being played out on the same field. Dupuis struggles with but ultimately revels in his rechosen medium, opening new doors for himself both of technique and of content.

In *Always Jones'n*, a pair of eyeballs balance like eggs on the edge of a flesh-colored platform, presiding over a bizarre landscape in which a plethora of patterned segments (tricolor rainbow, crystalline facets of blue and brown, a blue and white area with the appearance of fabric) spill over the striped borders of the picture; in *Candy Coated Mountain* an arrow points out a small pile of "paint for paint's sake" brushstrokes. *This Worrisome Land* is a barren expanse built up from small daubs of many different colors, with a cartoonish