

Two views of Matthew Weinstein's *The Triumph of Painting*, 2004-05, bronze, gold, chrome; at Sonnabend.

ing prelude and aftermath of a breakup of her own, Emin delivers little to convince us of her suffering in this show, attractive though the expressions of it might be. The entire series of work is quite elegant in its exploration of neutral tones, fabric and thread textures.

A curious trolley with slats of weathered timber stacked on it sat near the gallery's entrance. Titled *Looking for Fire*, the not especially labor-intensive piece forced examination of everyday materials, which, worn and battered, possessed a delicate, understated beauty. Across the room in a corner sat the mysteriously titled *Sleeping With You*, a small heap of found wooden spirals with a white neon light hung above it in a downward-sloping, squiggly line, making for a visually tasteful contrast between grit and glamour (which seems fitting for Emin, given her current state of affairs). This optically enchanting dichotomy becomes yet more spectacular in the exhibition's largest work, *Salem*, a rough-hewn, latticed, spiraling tower bearing resemblance to Tatlin's *Monument to the Third International*, but made of weathered wood, with a floor-to-ceiling white neon tube spiking gorgeously through its middle. It would seem Emin wants to explore conceptual terrain, but she refuses to go there. And that's part of the beauty of her art: she continues to insist that

her work be visceral, immediate and nothing other than what it is.

Now that Emin has moved beyond the brash, difficult, revelatory years of her 30s, she demonstrated here that she has much more going for her than her big mouth, rough past and insistent sexuality. She has a truly exceptional formal sensibility.

—Sarah Valdez

### Matthew Weinstein at Sonnabend

Matthew Weinstein's recent exhibition at Sonnabend, continuing his longtime interest in images of blood and death, brought heightened allure to the reminders of life's transiency represented by the skull and bones of the memento mori. With a passing glance at the agenda of the Saatchi Gallery's gigantic ongoing exhibition, "The Triumph of Painting," and to the iconography of the embalmed creatures of Damien Hirst, Weinstein's sculpture *The Triumph of Painting* (2004-05) consists of two life-size, cast-bronze skeletons elaborately suspended by cables from the gallery ceiling. Caught in a balletic game of Frisbee that recalls José Posada's popular satirical broadsheets made during the autocratic rule of Mexican dictator Porfirio Díaz, they suggest the proximity of death in a gilded age.

Weinstein's pitcher is propelled forward with the momentum

of release, while the catcher reaches through space in a long, ecstatic dive, just short of receiving the shining disk in a gesture that recalls an electric moment in a game of Quidditch. The skeletons are fixed in place and suspended by wire, the graceful vertebrae threaded with metal rods, each rib drilled through and joined with thin wire to the next. The ball joints are attached to the sockets by clamps, and the concentration of weight suspended along the length is fixed by pulleys. The left arms and right legs are gilded like sacred relics, and the crowns of the skulls are attached by simple hooks.

Weinstein addresses the *vanitas* tradition in "Ikebana" (2005), a series of mixed-medium paintings of floral arrangements laminated to wood supports. Measuring 60 inches on a side, they derive from the Japanese esthetic of their title, with photo-based images that variously include digitally composed flowers, a table lamp and decorated shade, a cascade of shining disks and a cache pot. Bananas and a banana flower, aerial-rooted exotics and twigs of curly willow are mirrored in black, lacquerlike surfaces that retain the halation of an airbrush along the curved edges of the support.

In a separate gallery, Weinstein covered one wall with *100 Chances for Happiness* (2005), a grid of bronze cocktail

umbrellas—painted and ornamented with tropical fish and flowers—fixed perpendicular to the wall. Weinstein associates the playfulness of the umbrellas with the imagery of *Three Love Songs from the Bottom of the Ocean* (2005), a DVD projected on the opposite wall. This engagingly awkward animated loop stars a tail-flipping diva of a koi, all eye-lashes and red lips, singing in a whiskey-voiced contralto provided by actress Blair Brown. With lyrics provided by the artist, she warbles a confession to the viewer in his stead: "I like war, I don't like blood," "Where are you? I can't see you but I know you're there" and, finally, "My home is a fortress." —Edward Leffingwell

### Geoffrey Hendricks at Pavel Zoubok

A sense of quiet awe at how quickly life passes lingered in Geoffrey Hendricks's deceptively simple show—expressed, for instance, in the evanescent clouds populating the watercolors of skies that appeared throughout. In *Sky/Slate Wall #8/New York* (2006), a wall was occupied floor-to-ceiling by a grid formation of Hendricks's signature skies, interspersed with weathered roof slates of the same size. The latter are from the Fluxus artist's 19th-century Greenwich Village building, the former



painted at his Nova Scotia farm.

Hendricks has for some time also been engaged in musings about the moon in its phases. *Caliper with New Moon/Full Moon* (2005) has two small watercolor skies hanging from the hooked arms of a rusted caliper, a device used to measure diameter. Lunar cycles, of course, chart seasons, and Hendricks, in these and other pieces, seems to be reminding us of how we attempt to contain time by counting it. An antique *Birdcage with Pulley* (2005) was suspended from the ceiling, again with two sky views hanging from it. The checklist pointedly noted the cage contained "bundles of faggots," twigs wrapped with twine. This "cage aux folles" was one of several backhanded references to the gay identity Hendricks began embracing, often in performances, long before it was fashionable, and most recently in a 1995 Fluxus wedding/performance to partner Sur Rodney (Sur).

Hendricks has a quirky sense of humor and is a true iconoclast. Even his romanticism seems a kind of rebellion against art-world cynicism. *Sky/Skull* (2004), a weathered table supporting various objects, is in his lyric mode. Among the objects is a small, rough-hewn pine box stood vertically, its lid partially open to reveal an interior lined with an antique etching, which is a kind of pre-X-ray conception of a baby in a womb ready to burst forth; it seems a metaphor for the body on its life-journey. This box is connected via twine to the skull of a small animal, perhaps a little goat.

And the artist reached out in a

quiet way to the viewer. A stool beneath the table seemed an invitation to sit and don the white gloves provided to handle the various objects, including a pile of moonlight-infused watercolors. Also there was a pair of small Tibetan brass cymbals, tempting the visitor to strike them together. If one did, one would hear a keen ringing, eventually dying, but not too quickly, vibrating with the same sweet pungency that marked this exhibition as a whole.

—Carey Lovelace

## Louise Fishman at Cheim & Read

To make a stroke of paint seem equivalent to a shaft of light is no small bit of magic, especially when it lacks any particular chromatic association with luminescence, and moreover is buried deep in a thicket of other paintstrokes. Pulling off this trick, which Louise Fishman does, for instance, in the scintillating, black-spattered lemony green of *Rock and Ruins* (2005), is, however, ancillary business—a spark thrown off in the heat of action. What matters in her recent paintings is movement: the tensile energy of linear structures cantilevered into space; the friction of bodies of paint piling on, creating collisions of decidedly impure color.

That the organization of Fishman's work derives ultimately from the grid, which was key 35 years ago, is vestigially apparent though less and less important. Some of the mark-making in the current paintings inclines toward writing, as has been true for around a decade. The cal-



Louise Fishman: *Rock and Ruins*, 2005, oil on linen, 60 by 70 inches; at Cheim & Read.

igraphic figures striding through *An Appearance of Again* (2005) in fact approach the pictographic, even the incipiently human. In other paintings—the moody, indigo-suffused nocturne *Moon and Movies* (2003), for example—the scaffolding is close to architectural; in *The Art of Losing* (2003), with its dense black bars, the architecture seems nearly penal. Occasionally there are patterns borrowed from textiles, as in *Les Nuits d'Été* (2005), where dusty late-summer colors are loosely brushed into a big checkerboard-patterned weave. But none of these structuring systems prevails over the work's centrifugal forces, which are, generally, perilously close to irresistible.

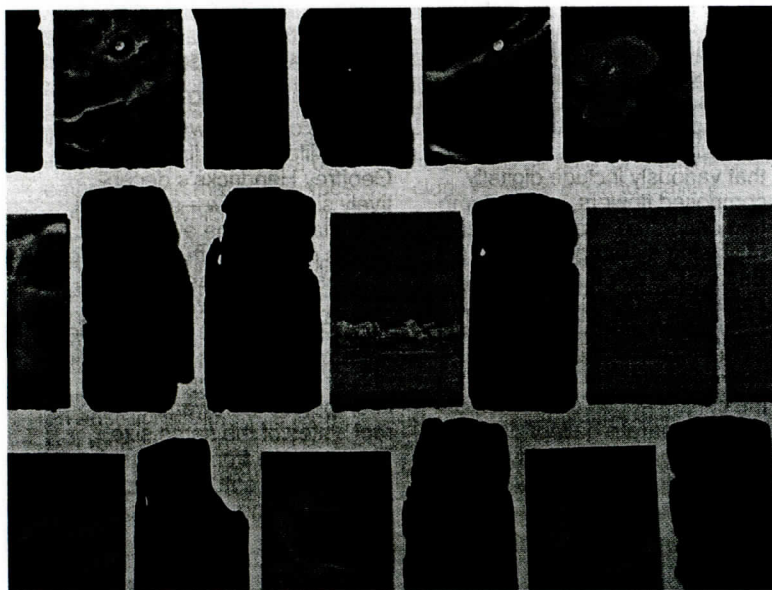
Much has been made of Fishman's unladylike athleticism as a painter, of her use of big stiff brushes and, especially, a serrated trowel, and it is true that while the trail left by the knife is often oddly buoyant and even a little decorative, you can't miss the danger of its edge. Even when Fishman mutes her attack, as she does, a little, in *Les Nuits d'Été* and also in the slightly grayed blues and pinks of *Wild Poem* (2004), the restraint itself registers as an energetic struggle. Once, and not briefly, Fishman was a very agitated artist, and minced no words about it (a series of abstract paintings from 1973 paired the names of women artists and the word "angry"). An abundance of painterly vigor seems the lasting expression of that impulse. She also clearly still

keeps other painters in mind. When, in the current work, the dialogue appears to be with Joan Mitchell, the tension lets up a little, as in *A Few Things for Themselves* (2005), a bucolic romp in lovely greens and blues. When de Kooning or Rouault or Mary Heilmann seem to be standing at Fishman's shoulder, the conversation is livelier.

Incidentally (and perhaps a little pettily), it seems a shame, with paintings that slash and burn their way right to the edge of the canvas, to use elaborate bright white frames that put moats between image surfaces and walls. They objectify and sequester work that is all infectious energy, the more compelling for its virulence.

—Nancy Princenthal

Detail of Geoffrey Hendricks's *Sky/Slate Wall #8*/New York, 2006, slate from artist's 19th-century townhouse and watercolor on paper; at Pavel Zoubok.



## Jin Meyerson at Zach Feuer

"High Cholesterol Moment" was Korean-born, U.S.-raised Jin Meyerson's second solo exhibition at Zach Feuer. Each recent painting, based on collages, includes a stunning array of imagery in jarring combinations. Disparate scenes—color and black and white, photographic and painterly, popular and personal—butt up against each other as if strips of various images had been physically woven together and the result reproduced on canvas. Objects often appear to dissolve, *Matrix*-like, into another dimension. Most of the paintings measure over 10 feet to a side and are so dense