

The Possibility of Freedom

Beverly Acha's paintings harness the formal elements of abstract painting (color, line, shape, scale), and through these visual cues she offers a deeper freedom in the understanding of space and time. An undeniable map of the psyche emerges through a repeating perceptual thread of interconnectedness. Her paintings point to the experiential that we cannot grasp physically but can only sense intuitively. In other words, Acha demands physicality from the ephemeral through the solitary act of painting.

The meditative studio practice that Acha has brought with her to Roswell, New Mexico, has gained a new clarity of vision, a development owed to the distinctive landscape unlike any she has worked in before. Through the studio window, a viewfinder that Acha has always been engrossed with, light, space, and time operate as control elements in her painting practice. In this new body of work, Acha is taking hold of time as if it is tangible by employing Albers' color theory, which becomes factual as she sensitively pairs colors and lets their friction buzz or their harmony hum. Granting weight to light and shadow, she explores dimensions that we cannot see, and through her intuitive painting process weaves them together to magically invoke understanding of the past and the future in the present.

The more that you think you understand about Acha's paintings, the more you realize you don't understand the world at large. The slippage and collapse of time on the surface of a canvas suddenly disrupts all of our expectations within the everyday. Acha's study of blue in the painting *Untitled (waves)* performs a modest shift of tonal color, forcing time to pass at a rate that she controls. This simple act of mixing paint turns into a faux-reality tempo that is in turn believable as "time." Time is simply a system controlled by light, color is an indicator of passing time, and in Acha's paintings this exterior understanding can fluidly move to the interior.

Acha wrote, "time is a figment that space conjures, but I am not in the space as my flesh knows it. I am in the space as my mind knows it." By presenting us with her newest body of work, Acha invites us into her mind by way of painting, and gives buoyancy to the idea that perhaps all of our limitations in reality, are actually freedoms.

Kati Gegenheimer
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Untitled (wavy), 2016, oil on canvas, 22 x 18 inches



Untitled (small portal), 2016, oil on canvas, 15 x 10 inches