

Georgopoulos, Alexis, "*Until I Know the Pattern*", *A principle of randomness and rough-hewn craft*, San Francisco Chronicle, April 25, 2007

"Until I Know the Pattern"
A principle of randomness and rough-hewn craft
By Alexis Georgopoulos

Images : L-R from top



Timothy Marvel Hull, Katherine Mansfield, 2006
oil on canvas, 48 x 36"; Erwace, 2006, oil on canvas, 42 x 36

Using as its departure point the notion that patterns may reveal something fundamental about larger, more ineffable things, "Until I Know the Pattern" offers two differing approaches. Timothy Marvel Hull's work, consisting mostly of graphite drawings on paper, occupies that particular space currently in vogue among certain young artists who draw - which is to say, he works with esoteric metaphysical imagery, using intricate patterns and figurative abstraction, aspiring toward some transcendental end. Hull's pieces currently focus on subject matter pertaining to Sufi philosopher G.I. Gurdjieff - his likeness, devotees such as writer Katherine Mansfield, and the ecclesiastical buildings associated with his Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man. Each is drawn deftly, intricately, and mathematically, as if Emma Kunz had been lured into portraiture and still lifes. Certainly many of Hull's pieces are gorgeous and supremely crafted. They are rigorous in their detail. The artist wouldn't be the first to treat Gurdjieff as the apotheosis of self-awareness, but somehow Hull falls short of such worship, slimly tending to the side of inquiry. One wonders what Edward Said would have had to say about his work.

Dave McDermott's work, in comparison, is characterized by a principle of randomness and rough-hewn craft. Using drawings on paper, photomontage, and a blanket covered in ephemeral color, he turns to random patterns for the central philosophical filling of his work. Most of his collage pieces involve filling human likenesses with abstract collections of color. It's an effective technique in *Lilliput* and *Untitled (Warwick #1)*, though *Untitled (Return to the Fold)* is much stronger, characterized by a subtlety that makes you question whether anything strange is, in fact, at hand at all. McDermott's untitled centerpiece, a 5-by-10-foot blanket covered in a sort of globular macrame, is the inner filling of his collaged humans, brought to life and made tactile. In bringing these color patchworks into our third dimension, McDermott pries open the fabric of being and finds randomness. Together, Hull's and McDermott's pieces make for a canny alchemy. They may not answer any questions, but that's the role of science, isn't it?

San Francisco Chronicle, April 2007