

Art in America

INTERNATIONAL • REVIEW

EXHIBITION REVIEWS

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David Solomon: *Knowledge of Good and Evil*, 2011, oil on aluminum, 30 by 22 inches; at David Richard Contemporary.

DAVID SOLOMON DAVID RICHARD CONTEMPORARY

David Solomon has been an active member of the Santa Fe art community for the 11 years he has lived here, as both a painter and an independent curator. His latest exhibition demonstrated not only his artistic maturity but also his consistent drive toward pictorial originality.

All 15 works (2010 or '11) are oil on aluminum panel and range from 1 to 3 feet to a side. The paint appears to float on the surface. The lustrous *Knowledge of Good and Evil* exemplifies Solomon's nimble compositions. Its forms evoke microscopic life, like zygotes, amoebas or paramecia, strange things seen in a droplet of water. A quivering yellow blob, with a white-dotted black shape hovering inside it like a cell's nucleus, seems about to be pierced by a striated projectile that is pointed at both ends. The latter form is recurrent at varying sizes throughout the canvases, and can recall a leaf, a football or a blimp. In *Unknown Fruits*, it appears more like a large green crescent.

Complications Arise, Beauty Persists contains three of the projectiles: two are black with white stripes, the other yellow and gray-green. They are superimposed on a large peach-colored shape that looks like a speech bubble.

While most of the works are completely abstract, several approach figuration. In *Mother and Child*, a biomorphic blue form outlined in peach dominates the canvas, evoking a child in swaddling. It is watched over by a black shape with a single, moon-like gray eye that looms behind the child. On the pinkish-red ground in *Versions of the What #3*, three glowing red orbs and a dripping passage of horizontal yellow strokes frame a lively presence that leans in from the canvas's right side. The tripartite form, in black, white, red and blue, resembles a cartoonish figure, its boxy torso supporting a grinning head topped by three antennalike protuberances.

Born in Kingston, N.Y., in 1976, Solomon studied at the San Francisco Art Institute, where he worked as a studio assistant to Frank Lobdell, whose formal vocabulary Solomon sometimes echoes.

Prehistoric petroglyphs scattered

throughout the landscape in the environs of Santa Fe have certainly informed the artist's work. Consciously or not, Solomon's paintings share their sprightly yet numinous qualities.

—Jan Ernst Adlmann