

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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Cecily Brown's Choreographed Flesh Breakdown

Priscilla Frank



Untitled, 2013 ©Cecily Brown. Courtesy of the artist and Gagosian Gallery. Photography by Robert McKeever

Cecily Brown's painted nudes are impossible to pin down. They appear to be in motion, but whether they're weightlessly floating or melting is harder to discern. Are the paint-heavy forms solid or liquid, translucent or opaque? Attempting to dissect the chaos only throws the viewer further into unrecognizable terrain.

Brown moved from the UK to New York in the 1990s, where she immediately became an art world hit, due to both her erotic content and youthful edge. Over the years the artist's works have scrambled sex, chaos and violence in varying ratios. Her "jungles of hide-and-seek images," as Adrian Searle described them, have evolved without necessarily making progress, which is not a bad thing.

Brown's flurries of bodies exist on the fringes of figuration; gazing upon them feels like peeking into a forbidden sexual ritual and quickly averting your eyes, only to have a vague sketch of the happening forever emblazoned in your consciousness.

Somewhere between a scantily-clad seance and an overheated bathhouse, Brown's crammed canvasses provide a contemporary, feminine answer to macho Abstract Expressionists like

Willem DeKooning. Her fields of fleshy confetti are one of the most compelling arguments today for the continued power of painting. Basically, we can't get enough.

As you might imagine, Brown's works beg to be devoured, ahem, in the flesh. Her work is currently on view on Los Angeles in her first LA solo exhibition in ten years, so if you're a west coaster, we highly recommend taking advantage.

Cecily Brown will show at Gagosian Gallery in Los Angeles until October 12, 2013.