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Color Coded

Ronnie Landfield and Peter Reginato



RONNIE LANDFIELD *Radical Light*, 1996, Acrylic on canvas, 24½ x 65½ inches

Rumors to the contrary, the mid-60's Color Field movement known as Lyrical Abstraction lives, and here to bear witness are the recent landscape evocations (mustn't mistake them for real landscapes) of Ronnie Landfield. They are nicely paired with the irrepressible color sculptures of Peter Reginato, complexes of cutout metal shapes that lie in cheerful messes on the floor or assert themselves in upright stances.

In Mr. Landfield's generic scapes, bold strokes, streaks and washes of color, sometimes diaphanous, other times robustly layered, give the surface vibrant life, as in "High Tide" (1998), an intense vertical orchestration of red, orange, yellow, pink and violet blue that shoots across the canvas topped by an empyrean of nuanced lavender hues. A wide, dark band closes off the painting at the bottom, a device - distracting, in my opinion - that Mr. Landfield often uses to indicate that the work is not a recognizable scene.

The most impressive painting here is the most recent, "Gulf Wind" (2005), in which a radiant blue sky is visited by a rushing beige cloud that, streaked with colors of red and

yellow persuasion, almost has the fanciful profile of a wind god. Everything works in this one.

A former painter, Mr. Reginato structures his Cubist-originated welded-steel sculptures from a large, biomorphic vocabulary of shapes à la Matisse's cutout collages and Miró's quirky signs: rings, stars, shells, leaves, spirals, twists, zigs, zags, cookie-cutter forms and such, each one as carefully and delicately painted as if it were on canvas. A floor arrangement called "Lloyal Mdewa Canton" (2005) is built of exuberant shapes, some flat and floor-hugging, others that form dimensional aggregations. Altogether, the sprawly nonform of the work, liberated from Cubism but still in the family, exhibits a deft artistic control.

His cutout forms make sportive, stand-alone small figures, too, like "Little Mo in Red" (2005), a creature of brightly painted components that seems part dancer, part cowboy, part symphony conductor. It grows on you.

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