

Holland Cunningham: “Chrystie Paintings” Opens at Quogue Gallery

June 24, 2015

by Sponsors

June 23 - July 20, 2015

Opening Reception: July 4, 4-7 p.m.

The Quogue Gallery is pleased to announce an opening on Tuesday, June 23, 2015 of “Chrystie Paintings,” recent oil, enamel and mixed media works by Holland Cunningham. An opening reception will be held at the gallery on Saturday, July 4, from 4 to 7 p.m.

The delicate harmonies of Holland Cunningham’s work are inspired by an array of seemingly disparate sources and influences that span centuries. Her passion for plein air painting—a fundamental practice for the Impressionists—in tandem with her deep reverence for Classical and Renaissance painting, spills onto her canvases to create abstract works that interweave echoes of history with the contemporary in a fresh and enduring way.

The artist’s work, be it oil on canvas or mixed media on paper, offers a symphony of subtleties. Paintings that at first glance appear predominantly monochromatic, such as *Chrystie (Pink)* and *Chrystie 18*, upon closer examination are found to be otherwise. Awash in a rainbow of hues that have been applied with delicate gesture, the colors on the canvas dance together in a graceful waltz. If it can be said that such artists as Joan Mitchell and Helen Frankenthaler tempered the wildness of their contemporaries Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, it should be noted that Cunningham has added gossamer wings to abstract expressionism. The tactility, the gesture, the layering of paint are all there, only the melodrama is missing.



"Chrystie (Pink)," 2015. Mixed media on paper, 30 x 40 inches.



"Chrystie 18," 2015. Oil and charcoal on canvas, 20 x 20 inches.

In abstract works such as *Chrystie (Pink)*, Cunningham layers colors so that the surface shimmers with hints of the underlying darker shades and allows the richer, saturated tones to peek out here and there. Bold bits of strong orange and reds define the composition by bleeding through a variegated weave of shades of pinks.

The same restraint is on display in her more figurative and representational works, such as *Chrystie 22 (Figures)* and *Christie 22 (Triptych)*. In the former, Cunningham's judicious use of fragmented line and shadow allow the figures to be at once earthly and ephemeral, exhibiting the geometry of Cezanne's solid figures in such works as *Three Bathers* (1879-92) while recalling the dreamy, floating figures of Chagall.

In *Chrystie 22 (Triptych)*, Cunningham's multitude of influences is at play. She has chosen a tri-

panel arrangement favored for religious painting from the Byzantine to the Renaissance era, an arrangement that has graced the altars of churches and cathedrals for millenniums. Here the three panels reverberate with the freshness of the landscape courtesy of her passion for plein air painting. Emerging from the textured canvas are leaf and flower forms that resonate with the ghosts of Monet's masterful Nymphaea paintings. In Cunningham's *Triptych*, whites and shades of green are enhanced by a varied underlying palette to create a painting that captures a particular natural environment in a unique and timeless way.



"Chrystie 22 (Figures)," 2014.
Mixed media on paper, 18 x 24
inches.



"Chrystie 22 (Triptych)," 2015. Mixed media on paper, 20
x 54 inches.

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Holland B. Cunningham was born in Roanoke, Virginia, in 1967 and educated at the University of

Virginia where she studied art history and studio art. She continued her studies in New York at the Art Students League and National Academy of Art and Design. During the summer of 2012, she was a resident at the Bau Institute in Puglia, Italy. Cunningham currently resides and works in both New York City and Quogue.

About Quogue Gallery

Quogue Gallery was established in 2014 by Chester and Christy Murray, longtime art collectors and residents of Quogue. The gallery features contemporary emerging and established artists whose work includes paintings and prints, photography, glass, and sculpture. The gallery's main focus is on displaying the work of East End artists who capture a mood, a color, or the extraordinary light that defines the East End. The artists do not necessarily represent the specific realities of the area, but rather have each been uniquely influenced or inspired by their surroundings. The gallery also exhibits modern and contemporary artists whose work fits within the gallery's aesthetic. Recent exhibitions have included: "Emerson Woelffer: Works on Paper"; "Le Corbusier: Unité"; and "Shifting Tides: Photographs by Janice Mehlman."

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BASIC FACTS: "Holland Cunningham: Chrystie Paintings" remains on view through July 30, 2015. An Opening Reception will take place on July 4 from 4 to 7 p.m. Quogue Gallery is located at 44 Quogue Street, Quogue, NY 11959. www.quoguegallery.com.

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