

Week 4: AB/EX ABROAD;

Lecture 6 – “San Francisco School,” an “école du pacifique”(?) and Gutai

I. AbEx in San Francisco

key decade: 1940 into 1950s

thesis:

There was an important impetus, if not an origin, for Abstract Expressionist “Field” painting in New York – in the painting being produced around San Francisco in the 1940s, particularly the somber, narcissistic abstractions of Clyfford Still.

- A) Clyfford Still (1904-80)
- B) Rothko and Reinhardt in San Francisco
- C) Richard Diebenkorn (1922-1993) – *genius loci*
- D) Others: Hassel Smith and Frank Lobdell

II. The promotion of an “école du pacifique” by French curator Michel Tapié, mid- to late ‘50s.

- A) Mark Tobey -US (1890-1976)
- B) Georges Mathieu -France (b. 1921)
- C) Jiro Yoshihara -Japan (1905-1972; westernized order of name.)

III. “Gutai Bijutsu Kyokai” (The Concrete Art Association, known now as “Gutai”); begun by Yoshihara and students, Osaka 1954. Outdoor art exhibit, October 1955.

“Gutai art does not alter matter; it gives matter life.... In Gutai art, the human spirit and matter, opposed as they are, shake hands... My respect goes out to the works of Pollock and Mathieu. Their works are the cries uttered by matter: by oil paint and enamel themselves.” (Yoshihara, Gutai manifesto, 1956)

- A) Sensei (teacher) Yoshihara Jiro (1905-1972)
- B) Radical Students:
 1. Shimamoto (Shozo) (b. 1928)
 2. Murakami (Saburo) (1920s? Died ca. 1996)
 3. Shiraga (Kazuo) (b. 1924)
 4. Tanaka (Atsuko) (b. 1932)

selected images on verso

SELECTED IMAGES

Rothko, Slow Swirl by the Edge of the Sea, 1944

Rothko, Multiform, 1948

Still, Brown Study 1935

Still, 1945 R

Still, 1953

Lobdell, Fall, 1957

Diebenkorn, Untitled 1949

Diebenkorn, Berkeley #8 1954

Tobey, Broadway (tempera) 1936

Tobey, Crystallization 1944

Yoshihara, Work 1961

Shiraga Sturrgle with Clay 1955, (photograph documenting performance)

Murakami Tearing Paper or, At One Moment Opening Six Holes, 1955 (photograph documenting performance)

Shimamoto Trous (Holes) 1950

Shimamoto Hurling Colors 1956 (photograph documenting performance)

Yoshihara, Work 1962 (circle)

Shiraga documented painting with feet, 1955

Shiraga, Tenisei Sekhatsuki, 1959

Tanaka Electric Dress 1957

Mathieu, Composition 1953

Mathieu, Simon Comte de Crepy 1959

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