

LAWEEKLY

Tomory Dodge at Acme.

By Christopher Miles

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Tomory Dodge, *Ice Age*, 2008, oil on canvas, 80 x 90 inches

Jackson Pollock believed technique must suit its age; his own technique, he said, was fit for the age of the “airplane, the atom bomb, the radio” — all object lessons in a radical reshuffling of man’s existential position.

With a kind of verve no doubt fed by digital culture, sci-fi, “post-abstract” painting and the punk, new-wave and hip-hop music that fuel his age rather than the ashcan/surrealism/tragedy/jazz diet his AbEx predecessors noshed on, Tomory Dodge, in his latest work, makes barely imagistic images comprising mostly color, shape, gesture and plays of surface. And impressively, he achieves a genuine relevance, even a prescience about the now.

An icy composition of slashed and slathered blues, riddled with a multihued confetti, is both a summit to conquer and an ice-agey emblem of havoc. An arrangement of saucy warm colors titled *Kicker* is all reverie and reveling, and also hangover. And multiple canvases that convert viscous brushwork into levitating clutter against dark, flat backgrounds peppered with blurry starbursts are surely the product of a kid who grew up in the era after Han Solo jumped the Millennium Falcon out of hyperspace in the middle of a debris field that had been the planet Alderaan. But they’re also the product of an age in which it’s only seemed like a matter of time before what actually happened three days before Dodge’s show opened — the first accidental satellite collision, resulting in an orbiting array of space junk.

Though he clearly indulges in some of the transcendence-chasing that led Mark Rothko to abstract the luminous atmospherics of the Romantics, Dodge seems as well to follow Adolph Gottlieb’s assertion (as he tried to give image to the conflated aspiration, awe and angst of the postwar midcentury) that “so-called abstraction” could be “the realism of our time.” And in succeeding at timeliness in his age, Dodge succeeds in a timelessness toward which his forebears also aspired.

Tomory Dodge at ACME., 6150 Wilshire Blvd., L.A.
Tues.-Sat., 11a.m.-6p.m., through March 14.
(323) 857-5942 or www.acmelosangeles.com.