

*Excerpts/Images: FROM: Naoko Haruta and Contemporary Abstract Painterly*

*Intention Part 2*

*--Steve Light--*

*...The dilemma of our artistic, literary, and philosophical late-modernity--  
but this dilemma already exists within all our modernities and within all their  
temporalities since 1930--derives from the maximalist temporalities and  
finalities of rupture and transformation. Everything, seemingly, has already  
been done. How does one continue to invent and play the saxophone after  
Charlie Parker? Not by abandoning what Parker had done. And so Eric Dolphy  
invents and intensifies anew. With Life #16 Naoko Haruta initiates a new  
epoch in our abstract painterly modernity. No more fear, no more  
subservience!*



*{Life #16, acrylic on canvas, 43" x 67"}*

*There is a mass, an intensity, a force in this painting that overcomes the drip lines while simultaneously being constituted by them. Upon a ground of light blue and blue successive layers of brush strokes and drip lines are heaped up in yellow, black, light blue, dark blue, light green, dark green, blue-green, purple-lavender, dark red, white, and orange. The black brush strokes sear through the painting everywhere giving the drip lines a multiplying appearance. The foreground blues and yellows achieve an ostensible autonomy at several depths at once giving energy to the freedom of the lines*

*and strokes. There is an emergence here, an intensification that is felt in every kind of affective immediacy, yet at every moment at once temporal and spatial there is a munificent—and magnificent!-- unity as if every arrangement were the one perfect realization. Blue goes everywhere across the canvass, every which way as if to elicit its own flight, yet it is these various tones of blue that hold everything together while the yellows coursing through middle ground and foreground bring the undertows of the painting's depths to the surface and then at once back again into the generating cycle. The openings of space at the bottom corners and at the bottom middle of the painting as well as this purple-blue which distills the other blues aerates the painting and its mass so that its depths have ever the more expansion and space. The amassing and the flows of the black brush strokes are gravitational in their force while the splotched and dripped movements of red are as if the perfect weight and curvature of the painting's fabric...*

*....These sprinkles of color swirl amidst the splotches and drops in blue and yellow which mingle at the most immediate surface layers of the painting while this extraordinary accretion of levels is experienced in a startling kind of introjection. Energy, radiance, emergence, origin. One feels the force of the painting not just within one's perception, but upon it, literally upon one's eyes! The blue, yellow, red, and green frontal drips eddy in a plasmatic dance and play as if in a kind of gravity that has become the seasoning of space and*

*space the seasoning of every density. These sinuous, lithe, thin drip lines streak through the thicker drip lines and brush strokes as if music could achieve this kind of simultaneity in which we could hear at once pianissimo and forte.*

*...Up close, the adventure starts anew in these webs of color and line that outstrip the achievements of the entirety of contemporary painting. The richness of these assembling lines, drip lines, splotches, and brush strokes, brought together as if graceful acrobatics and clairvoyance were the resonating finality of each other. Each area of the painting in its adventure is like a monad opened up to the entirety of the painting--to the entirety of abstraction's riches.*

*...Our eyes follow and re-follow as if to a vanishing point of origin and upsurge, red, green, blue-green, light-blue, all as in the unions they would most want to have. The painting never stops revisiting us, revisiting itself, sustaining its duree in the most splendid kinds of comradery and love. Could we ever imagine a greater intimacy in painting?*





*{Detail #1 from Life 16}*

*The painting can never be consumed nor completed. This is a direct counter to so much of contemporary abstract painting where-in a painting's only raison d'etre is to attract attention as a "noticeable image", but which image, thereby, has already become its own planned obsolescence--it doesn't even begin because it has already been consumed in a glance. Never consumed or completed. Criteria? The unrelenting force of the lines in Life #16, of the assemblage, its sallies, its acrobatics, the colors as if perfectly elected for this*

*mass, this energy, this vivacity that is not just the point of arrival of the velocities of the painting's elements and unifying finalities, but at once its point of departure, all these in their concert and unceasing encores tell us that this is what abstract painting is in those moments when it is for-itself and not for-another, when it has refused every fear and every complicity.*

*In Naoko Haruta's painting, Life #17, the brush strokes are larger. The black brush strokes are as if banners swirling to such effect that the drip lines are energized in a way that they never were in Pollock or since. Naoko Haruta here finds contrasts of dark blue and sky blue whose values have learned all the arts of counterpoint and...reciprocity! The thinnest of the drip lines weave and swirl in every possibility of motion and drip, totalizing the vocabulary of abstraction and of*

action.



*[Life #17, acrylic on canvas, 43" x 67"]*

*Every drip line becomes a virtuosity not just in its solo performance but ever more in unions and unity. It is as if at every stage of the painting in its coming to be the next stage awaited as a still greater perfection. Blues, blacks, yellows, reds, and these white lines at the deeper levels of the painting act as a yeast of happiness! Here the promise of happiness is already kept even before it is made! And the yellows are as a sun dispersed*

*throughout all its affections. What serenity in the power of the lines and their total effect! What subtleties in these light and dark purples and light and dark greens that we find at the middle and deeper levels of the painting! The thinnest drip lines jetting across the canvas become filaments in this extraordinary mix that intensifies the flow and flows of the lines and brush strokes, of all the colors themselves. These combinations of brush and drip lines give the actionist form an increasingly unique point of departure and arrival just as this combinatory of the intuitions her palette and drip lines create give the musics of abstraction resonances of such delight. And the continual resurgent concatenations of the drip lines are at once catalyst and effect of these salients that are the black bands, banners, brushstrokes in their calligraphic grace and*

sweetness.



{Detail #1 from Life 17}

*The blacks here do not slash as much as in Life #16, although slash they do. They glide and soar in the swelling fullness of this painting. Like stitching, like fabric, as if Being and Becoming embroidered one another with threads of infinity and threads of every idea vibrating with affections which, like the*

*most splendid of gratitudes, overflow themselves in each successive act and instant.*

*Every dream that abstraction has ever had, every dream that abstract painters have ever sought to realize--but could not--has been realized here in this painting. If gratitude always overflows itself, overflows every effort to express itself, then this painting is, precisely and all at once, the gratitude of painting and all its histories, gratitude given to abstract painting's most quintessential and most developed dream on the one hand and on the other hand the gratitude of this dream given in return to its most profound realization!*

*What does abstract painting do? What can it do? Just as it is Castoriadis in his Imaginary Institution of Society--and not Marx in Capital nor Lukacs in The Ontology of Social Being nor Sartre in the Critique of Dialectical Reason nor Habermas in On the Reconstruction of Historical Materialism--who showed us what it is that socio-history and socio-historical action truly are and truly do (and what their significations are in terms of their being and having too), so it is that Naoko Haruta demonstrates that abstract painting need not reduce itself to any of the constructs or coefficients proclaimed for it--dictated for and to it--including the one of its end, that it needn't de-structure nor deconstruct nor interpret or interrupt or reinterpret or represent (or not represent!) or investigate anything--not even itself! She shows us that the*

only elan--and elan of advance!--is its very own "essence of manifestation"(Michel Henry): immanence again as both the threshold and limit point of the realizations of abstraction. She has understood in painting just as Bergson and Jankelevitch and in another vein Michel Henry understood in philosophy that life is the experience of affectivity, our experience of ourselves and the experience of abstract painting take place neither directly in an in-itself or in a for-itself but only within, in the within-itself of immanence as affective effectivity. Do not deny paint its joy nor joy its paint! Never has abstract painting gone so far into its own immanence and effectivity. And in this Naoko Haruta has shown us that beyond all the possible and potential representations of the unconscious on the one hand and of the representations of the everywhere of essence and of the virtualities of non-representation on the other hand, abstract painting can also achieve the vertigos and velocities of every agon of the extrinsic and intrinsic. With Naoko Haruta abstract painting exhibits the marvels of the discovery that it is from affectivities that being is always made. Yes, abstraction can very well-- in her hands at least--represent the knowledges and non-knowledges, the sciences and nesciences of the coincidentia oppositorum!

There are perfect poems. W.S. Merwin: Absence: "Your absence goes through me/ Like a thread through a needle/ Everything I do is stiched with its color". Or this one by another poet: "I am weighted/ beneath/ my longing/

*Like the sun/ beneath/ its light." Perfect? Because they leave nothing extrinsic, nothing left to say. Because every word within a perfect poem is a determinate necessity. Because there is a perfect just weight (...to give just weight to all things!) between the poem and all the meanings which nevertheless must--and always--constantly overflow it. Yes, these, but more--and the essential--although not one more word, not even one! Perfect because by annulling the possibility of any better it has ruled out every other possible superlative. Yes, but paradoxically this would only be a penultimate answer! Perfect because we will always return to it first--perfect because it has annihilated the infinity and the infinite grief of the jamais-plus, of the never-more, and put in its place the magnificence of both the ever-more and the ever-the-more.*

*... If Life #16 gives us the emphatic forces of concentration and concretion, Life #17 resonates and donates every availability, all the fortissimos and grandissimos of beauty and sensuous delight. "All true insight forms an eddy" writes Benjamin in his Arcades Project. Benjamin also described a technique of awakening. So many of her other canvasses beckon--and swirl and awaken us and awaken abstraction itself. Look at the sumptuous integration of yellow and black, of red and blue in Life #147. Light and sky blues inhabit a background upon which yellow, orange, green, brick red, sea blue, green, and*

*black promote the generousities of palette and prominence, this community of colors in all their bravura, but also in all their tender whispers and caresses.*



*{Life #147, acrylic on canvas, 43" x 67"}*

*She has become the master of this seemingly impossible task of finding the right speed for every color at just the right time! It is the perfect proof both as evidence and as demonstration of the meaning of abstraction. Neither purification nor subtraction--aesthetics at once of cowardice and collusion--but rather the elementization of our world! Every limitation placed on abstraction in the manuals of the functionaries of art is obliterated in her all-*

*over drip line paintings such as Life #16, Life #17, Life #139, Life #147, etc., just as every prohibition on the possibilities of lyricism within our advanced modernity are rendered null in her more open and half and three-quarter-all over drip and brush stroke paintings.*



*{LIFE #125, acrylic on canvas, 43" x 67"}*



{Life #140: "Boris Pasternak: My Sister, Life", acrylic on canvas, 43"x67"}



*{Life #127, acrylic on canvas, 43"x67"}*



*{Life #94, acrylic on canvas,*

*43"x67"}}*



*{Life #118: "Mediterranean Inspirations", acrylic on canvas, 43"x67"}}*

*The distinction between modern and contemporary is false in poetry as in painting. Jean-Baptiste Para and Alain Suied inhabit the same poetic and historiosophical world as does Yves Bonnefoy and as did Edmond Jabes just as Wanda Coleman and Will Alexander inhabit the same poetic and historiosophical world as did Ginsberg, O'Hara, and Baraka. The irony is that*

*the contemporary and the post-modern are the labels adopted precisely by those who have forgotten that modernity is an agon which we have not transcended. It is precisely the smaller differences between let us say Pollock and Naoko Haruta in which we find the larger historical foundation and significance of Naoko Haruta's achievements. Her's is not any kind of return to a modern form. Because the agon of these modern forms continues to be the horizon of our life-world, they are precisely our forms: which modernity? which society? which socio-history? No contemporary forms have transcended these forms of our modernity because we have not yet left our modernity. Those who posit these distinctions between modern and contemporary have lost sight of every socio-historical and historiosophical differentia specifica. They always posit these distinctions which are not distinctions and they are always bereft of precisely the distinctions that matter the most. Naoko Haruta does not return to anything since she is fundamentally from the very start at the center of the most consequential--serious--commitment to abstraction's elements, emphases, electricities!*