



### LOS ANGELES

#### Chris Trueman: "Beneath the Skin" at Edward Cella Art + Architecture

"Beneath the Skin," an exhibition of Chris Trueman's new paintings at Edward Cella Art + Architecture, is provocative, to put it mildly. Being larger than life-size, the work washes over you. Its peacock color scheme is as provocative as its surface rhythms are alluring. With great coyness, different parts of the surfaces seem to bulge out into the viewer's space and then recede into each piece's pictorial depth. This unveiling, combined with the glimpses of what's beneath, suggests a veil dance. It's not a biblical one; rather, it's more a cinematic mosaic of three abstract painting traditions: Abstract Expressionism, Color Field painting, and Op Art.

From a distance, the paintings look as if they've been slashed, metaphorically, not literally, à la Lucio Fontana. The linear patterns (think Bridget Riley) they create on the surface are dynamic: horizontal or diagonal, they activate the surface tensions that dictate the rhythm of each piece. Sometimes the lines dominate the surface; what's beneath is barely visible. Other times, the lines become subordinated to what's beneath. What's revealed in these hide-and-seek compositions is sensuous. We catch glimpses of bulbous shapes stained (viz. Helen Frankenthaler) onto the canvas. We can see as much in the convex and concave contours of the surface lines. There's no explicit anatomical description but the correlation is there, just the same.

If Trueman is choreographing a veil dance of three prominent abstract styles, then he's not giving any one style a featured role. Each style has a place in the unveiling, the glimpsing, and the seduction. The compositions are seamless, a perpetual analysis of movement as convincing as, for instance, *The Winged Victory of Samothrace*. All told, the work is as insightful as it is hypnotic. The three styles collaborate toward an overall effect. This collaboration shows how, in 2014, it's not one or the other—the modernist imperative of taxonomical "isms" no longer exists. With their shimmying surfaces and voluptuous depths, the work reinforces, with remarkable poise, abstraction's vigor, its relevance, and its ability to describe the journey to the rapture that underlies the human condition.

—JAMES SCARBOROUGH

#### "VRB," 2014, Chris Trueman

ACRYLIC AND ACRYLIC SPRAY PAINT ON CANVAS  
60" x 48"

PHOTO: COURTESY EDWARD CELLA ART + ARCHITECTURE