

ARTFORUM

**3143 S. La Cienega Blvd., Unit A
June 25–August 13**

There's an internal logic to the thirteen small, untitled paintings in Lesley Vance's latest solo show. Which is to say, there's no need to muscle reason in here, even if it seems like the canvases could eventually transmit some secret code or ancient knowledge. Vance is known for her smeared and stroked wet-on-wet abstractions of *natures mortes* (collections of leaves, shells, wood, and rocks), and if her approach remains constant in this exhibition, don't expect to find more of the same. There is a greater focus on aspects of movement and light in her latest works. In some, luster seeps through hairline cracks; others seem to channel the source of their illumination from a hidden presence behind the wall, in a way that evokes Dan Flavin's fluorescent tubes.

Like those pivotal works, Vance's canvases, as well as the eight new unearthly watercolors on view, pull the world in, absorbing everything around them. But Vance does not aspire to Flavin's simplicity (or, for that matter, the clarity trumpeted by Barnett Newman). Instead, her process of veiling—from the translation of spotlit tableaux into individual marks on a canvas, to the ways in which she complicates the objectness of her works through the numerous, nearly sculptural layers of paint—provides something novel. Perhaps it is a different kind of clarity. In this show, colors migrate, forms mutate, and painting is a vehicle for more than mere contemplation, and something greater than a state of mind.



Lesley Vance, untitled, 2011, oil on linen, 14 x 12".

— Lauren O'Neill-Butler