

**MARVELLI GALLERY**  
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*OPENING RECEPTION: Thursday, January 13, 6-8 PM*

## **JOHN FINNERAN** IF I HAD MY WAY IN THIS WICKED WORLD

MARVELLI GALLERY is pleased to present *If I Had My Way In This Wicked World*, the first solo exhibition at the gallery of artist John Finneran. The show consists of several large-scale paintings and a large cast-aluminum sculpture. The following is a text written by artist Darren Bader after his visit to Finneran's studio:

I'm not a painter. I don't paint. I don't want to paint. I love looking at paintings (more than almost anything else). Paintings are known to make people swoon; I swoon. I like seeing John Finneran's paintings (and his sculptures which speak like paintings). He is the painter of my generation whose work I feel closest to—his is the painting that most often initiates my swoon.

I know myriad people have tackled the sensorium vis-a-vis painting in venerable tomes that I've never wanted to read. I know that [P]ainting's 'tactility' aims to take on a flesh and genius of its own later in its (inherited) history. So I just want to briefly reconfirm/reaffirm that beyond its graphic ingenuity and its embassy of color, painting becomes painting through the uncanny material seduction of its medium: painting crawls through your eyes and up and down your haptic receptors. It's touch-by-proxy.

I've been privy to 3D encounters with John Finneran's work many times over the past 4 years. I always find myself feeling it and thinking of it as a beaming, shadowy marriage to all things of painting-past (or if in the mood for something more finite/local: a sublime synthesis of Gottlieb, Guston, and Rothko). JF's colors resonate and float and resonate and float. His use of what could be thought of as hieroglyphs borders on the saccharine at every glance, but ultimately bores into the belly of the mind: whatever Freudian or Lacanian or Jungian or LadyGagaian categories apply. John's work deals with very basic announcements of the human condition through very (un)canny messengers.

Sentimentality has its pejorative sense and against all detractors of the acute, limpid powers of sentimentality, John paints the signs that are elemental and/or fundamental to personhood. The forms and characters he uses speak of the things we learned first in life: the early nouns, the early objects, the most ductile



metaphors. Garbage cans become the stuff that myth is made of. And of course elephants continue to emit their indelible tractor beam. Sentiment knows its home: the hand reaching out into space looking for friends, for the stuff that we will always reach for and look for. The eyes are prosthetic hands after all.

Don't touch, but look; or rather, touch by looking. Looking at John Finneran's paintings, I always want to touch. But I don't want to because I know that the touching-through-looking that is looking (and looking-at-paintings) is different than (and thus better than) touch. Art is a way to know the world through not touching? Is this true? John Finneran makes art: I like this most about his work.

John Finneran received his MFA from Bard College in 2008. He lives and works in New York. His work has been exhibited extensively throughout the United States and Europe including: Rivington Arms and Gavin Brown's Enterprises, New York; Tony Wight Gallery, Chicago; Arcade Gallery, London; and Upstairs Berlin, Germany. He is also participating in the upcoming exhibition, *Paint*, at the Saatchi Gallery, London.

For further information or images of the works included in the show, please contact Kendall Anderson at 212-627 3363 or [kendall@marvelligallery.com](mailto:kendall@marvelligallery.com).