

Art in America

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

January 2012



Jennie C. Jones: *Sustained Black with Broken Time and Undertone*, 2011, acrylic on canvas, 24 inches square, with acoustic noise control panel, 12 by 48 inches; at the Kitchen.

JENNIE C. JONES AND JOE WINTER THE KITCHEN

Jennie C. Jones's exhibition "Absorb/Diffuse" was disconcerting in its quiet and stark emptiness. A series titled "Acoustic Paintings" (all 2011) was paired with an approximately 7-minute sound score called *From The Low* (2011), consisting of three movements: Low, Pulse and Rest. Rest, a period of complete silence, was running when I walked in, so I had to wait a minute or two until I heard anything. In silence, the minimalist installation of so-called paintings—actually many were repurposed objects used in audio recording: black and gray panels that absorb and diffuse sound, sometimes with subtle glows of red peeking from behind—seemed austere and inaccessible. But when the sound began and my awareness attuned to the slow, pulsing revelation of collaged and rearranged music from composers spanning many periods and genres (including Bach, Prokofiev and Mingus),

Art in America

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

January 2012

View of Joe Winter's exhibition, showing (foreground) *A Record of Events (II)*, 2011, dry-erase ink and panels with aluminum frame; at the Kitchen.



I had the impression of listening to the thumping heartbeats of civilization while confined in a spaceship or tomb.

Jones's use of "micro-sampling," the pulling of individual notes rather than distinct melodies, echoes the minimalist aspect of the visual pieces. However, it was less rewarding to look at the physical remnants of sound technology masquerading as monochrome paintings than it was to listen to refined aural effects.

In the back gallery, Joe Winter's exhibition "The Stars Below" (all work 2010 or '11) reinforced the minimalist point of view. The first piece visible was a 4½-by-4-foot photograph that looked like a black square painted on the wall with white splashes, stains and scrawled numbers on it. Obscuring the center of the room was a large sliding dry-erase board on an aluminum frame. Its several panels were covered in black with striated pools of gray and white, suggesting the topography of a planet viewed from a great distance or the diagrammatic flow of turbulent storms. On the other side of the board, four irregular rectangles of black slate (apparently taken from an old schoolhouse) were each placed horizontally on legs, like tables. Pieces of chalk were secured vertically to the slate here and there, as liquid dripped from a dropped ceiling, creating puddles and splashes of white powder and crud. The erect chalk functioned like landmarks in a smooth and barren terrain.

Winter's use of low-tech classroom devices to suggest geological movement over long periods of time or formations seen from great distances is funny. He positions the ubiquitous and

outmoded as a gateway to the mysterious behaviors of our planet.

In both Jones's and Winter's exhibitions, content and materiality were not obvious; they required close attention to tease out. However, the reward was the opportunity they both offered to zoom out from microcosm to macrocosm. Jones reminds us that innovations in music, from rhythm and melody to advanced sound technology, emerged from and are reabsorbed back into our bodies. Winter showed us how the movements of the universe might be apprehended in a stain on a slab.

—Jennifer Coates