

Day, Karen, "Eli Ping", COOL HUNTING, 28 April 2011.

Eli Ping

Moody sculptural paintings by an emerging NYC artist

by Karen Day in Culture on 28 April 2011



Stark yet wonderful works that fall somewhere between painting and sculpture, NYC-based artist **Eli Ping's** practice is a study of unexpected tension in form, subject and tone. Ping says he's "ultimately interested in materials and process, and accomplishing a form that conveys energetic resonance to the viewer," a feat accomplished by keeping spontaneity alive in otherwise highly-considered compositions.

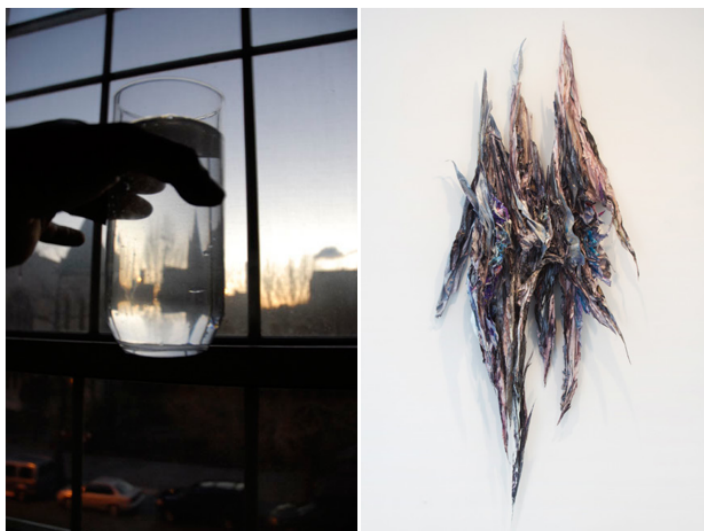
This ruminative approach to art-making shows up in his current solo exhibition at NYC's **Susan Inglett Gallery**, but also signals a shift. Where he previously worked heavily with resins, Ping found that their toxicity was a "major impediment to accomplishing intimacy" with his materials and switched to applying paint-soaked cotton to canvas.



The resulting fluid shapes have a sense of order without appearing overly worked—a tipping point for Ping. If a piece becomes too "fussy," he will often flip it over or turn it upside down, a technique borrowed from

Impressionism. Ping explains, “they would often paint over an entire area, some people would say that is a waste of energy but even if it’s not visible, it still informs the work.”

A painting resembling a classic Rorschach test clearly illustrates Ping's labor between intention and impulse. While symmetry abounds, he likens the unbalanced composition's structure to that of nature. Repetition develops organically without feeling forced, the result of a process that, like contemporaries such as designer Maarten Baas, lets ideas evolve over time.



A photo of a church steeple shot through a drinking glass several years ago, now appears as a “stretched from the top” form in some of his sculptural pieces. Ping stresses that he doesn’t set out to replicate what he sees, adding “I have a sense of what qualities I aspire to, usually in response to a feeling of lack in a previous piece. Any pre-envisioning doesn’t go farther than that.”



Looking to the future however, Ping says his work will fall more in line with his simplified lifestyle. Moving forward he will create pieces that, unlike his current complex and often quite fragile works, need not “to be handled with kid gloves” and can instead become a part of a person’s life, rather than just hung on a wall.

Eli Ping's third solo exhibition runs through 4 June 2011 at **Susan Inglett Gallery.**