



Anthony Thompson

Anthony Thompson's *New Chartier II*

Patchwork

William Zimmer

Anthony Thompson
Artist's Space
105 Hudson St. (closed)

In an Art Pick I wrote last week, I remarked how a single swipe of paint on the wall of the Julian Pretto Gallery by Anthony Thompson captivated me. At that time, I was unaware of Thompson's full installation at Artist's Space. Seeing a whole room full of paint patches made me appreciate their ease and vibrancy.

They cling to two things: the wall, and the premise that less, if it is resonant, is still capable of being more. It is hard to hang the words "pretty" and "sweet" around these didoes as one might around Richard Tuttle's work; their athleticism is what is most striking.

The patches celebrate the most basic quality of paint: its manipulability. Here, it does yoga. Various patches bend, curl,

arch or loop. The installation was like a dissected Abstract Expressionist painting. With Thompson, the energy of a brushstroke is isolated in an ultimately intractable emblem, rather than merged with competing energies.

Stored on glass between installations, the patches are composed of layers of different colored paint, and the geneology of a patch is detectable around its edges. The colors are admittedly pleasing — fruity or like bubblegum.

I usually disregard artists' wall statements, preferring, as Leo Steinberg admonishes, to look at the horses rather than listen to the horsetrader. But at the end of his statement Thompson said something that has stayed with me: "I try to keep in mind that the most subtle deviousness is less mysterious than simply being."