

JENNIFER CROSS at MM Gallery Southampton NY 11968
by Lucille Colin

MM Gallery calls Jennifer Cross's paintings mysterious, this is true, but they are much more. They are secretive, fierce, luminous and refined.

Some artists find the edges of their work to be exceedingly important this is not true here. Cross takes us right to the center, requiring us to come into the narrative, the story of which we have no idea, yet we are mesmerized by it. They are secretive and dangerous we are in and may not find our way out. The size of the paintings are not important, each one is handsomely planned and they fit perfectly in their dimensions. A skull in a work of art can be a cliché but in "Vanitas" the skull seems to take on different connotations. It's as if the literal is less frightening than the non literal.

Cross has a striking style that fits what she is trying to say. The layering is smooth and uncluttered there is just enough transparency to let us guess at or want to know what's beneath and to see the process of her work. We witness the drawing and redrawing. We experience inventive color. In "Rise" the mathematical definition of a slope. We see an unusual landscape, a curved and ever-changing horizon. In the work "Non Finito" small bodies swirl around as if on a carousel without the horses while sparks ignite from a cannon of sorts, one's eyes travel in several directions to avoid collision.

The last thing I noticed in Jennifer Cross's dazzling show were the sides of the paintings. Using the color and hue of each painting itself it is a calm frame that grounds it to the wall. A needed component in an her unsteady world.

