

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

Abraham Elterman
April 1 - May 1, 2004

Abraham Elterman's paintings inhabit a world defined by ambiguity: they evoke the figurative yet remain abstract; they consist of organic forms yet they are arranged into artificially conceived structures; they insist in the physicality of the forms yet suggest the magical. Their power lies in how dangerously close the images get to 'real' things while remaining elusive; the resulting paintings are pregnant in evocative familiarity that defies precise definition.

As the shapes agglomerate into structures, they glow, float, reflect, vie for space, push and cajole and cuddle among each other. While the separate shapes speak of individuality the composites speak of contact, of gentle prodding, of sensual touching. Thus individuality, boundaries and interaction emerge as the central themes of these paintings.

The viewer of these works may find himself/herself between trying to decipher the identity of the forms and accepting them for whatever they are and engaging in the internal logic of the work.

Difficult to categorize, the paintings are bold and enigmatic. The simplicity of the compositions, the modeling of the forms, the sensitivity of the shapes, the color harmonies, all contribute to an elegant and convincing presence.

Abraham Elterman is a Mexican artist that has lived in the Bay area since 1974. Self taught as an artist (he has formal training in the sciences (Ph. D. Berkeley) and has exhibited his work locally as well as in other cities. The character of his work has oscillated between the figurative and the abstract, having now settled into a sort of abstract figuration. The work has always been informed by strong traditional Mexican figurative elements such as those in the muralist movement that Elterman grew up with.