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GALLERIES

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Blum's companion pieces: Gary Edward Blum's work at Dolby Chadwick risks getting snarled in its own cleverness, but it presents viewers a healthy resistance. Healthy in the sense that, in a culture hooked on speed, it takes time to figure out and rewards inspection with a clear internal logic.

"Painting for Sylvia" (2010), a characteristic work in the series, consists of a small framed abstract "Study" that Blum has repainted - illustrated, really - as the kernel of a large unframed canvas.

In the painting, the "Study" appears to hang on a wall, but then you notice that the wall repeats, magnified, the composition of the "Study" itself.

In this toying with pictorial paradox, Blum may revisit territory explored by William Anastasi and Michael Snow - even by René Magritte (1898-1967) - decades ago, but a pervasive new postmodernist suspicion of representation has refreshed the exercise.

Gary Edward Blum: The Long Year: Paintings: Through Aug. 28. Dolby Chadwick Gallery, 210 Post St., S.F. (415) 956-3560. www.dolbychadwickgallery.com.

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