

Carl Fudge

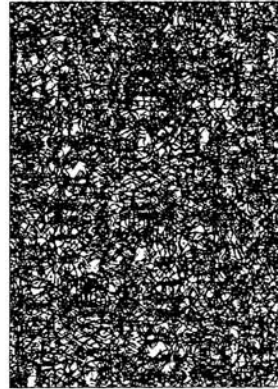
RONALD FELDMAN

Carl Fudge's lush paintings have become even more optically complex and elusive. All consist solely of abstract tangles of lines, mostly crisp and shiny marks on matte white grounds.

The panoramic *In Deep*, an ocher-and-black piece, fills our field of vision like a dense thicket. After prolonged viewing, mountainous bulges and clumps emerge from its surface like a three-dimensional computer rendering of a topographic map. In the smaller, monochromatic *Trace*, white lines play over an unmodulated black surface. The lines seem to pull the white from the gallery wall into the picture plane, as though it were a rectangular hole filled with cut lace.

Fudge constructs these works, at once cool and chaotic, out of computer-manipulated sections of Japanese erotic Ukiyo-e prints, blown up and printed on photo stencil and silk-screened onto wooden panels (hence the raised, almost plasticlike quality of the lines). While understanding his process adds to the conceptual interest, it ultimately makes little difference in the visual payoff.

Twelve color photos here better underscored the artist's preoccupation with systems and linear play: a cluster of raindrops beading up on a car-door window; some loosely coiled rope in the bed of a pickup truck; the pattern of whorls and knots in fake wood. In these he achieves much of what in the paintings, only better. He transforms recognizable objects into abstract rhythms and patterns, and arranges those patterns to indicate that they are part of a larger plan. —Sarah Schmerler



Carl Fudge, *High Trauma*, 1998, vinyl acrylic on wood panel, 48" x 40".
Ronald Feldman.