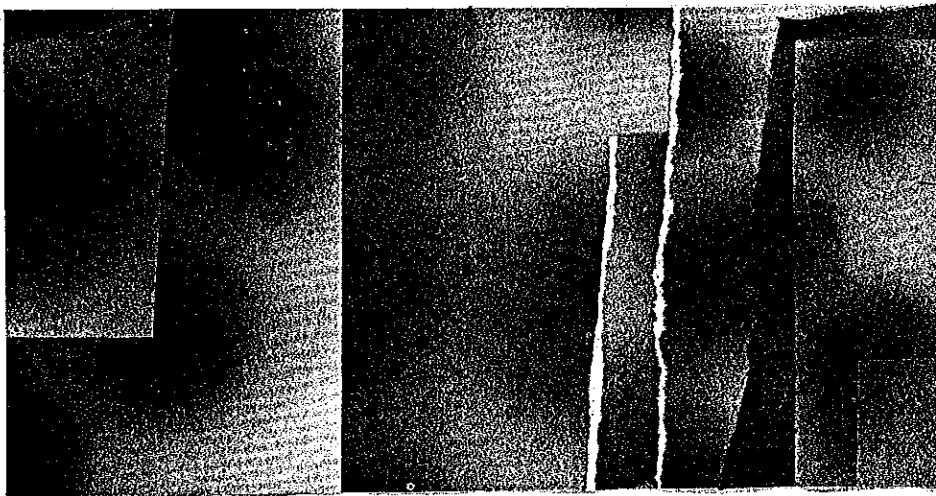


Especially Galleries, San Francisco, December 1971



INTRODUCING JOHN GREENE:

Toby Klayman mentioned a painter she knows, Jack Greene, "You won't believe we're friends if you go see his paintings—we're airbrush—you know kind of spacey. He's into Zen a lot." I asked if he'd shown in S. F. (Both he and Toby are from Boston.) No. Cool, I told her—I could do a Studio Review kind of trip. (The kind Harold Rosenberg warns us against.)

Jack Greene paints meditatively with air brush and his are the first air-brush paintings I've seen that use the technique with some point. (Before its been fuzzy photographic landscapes or wispy cloudy sky effects.)

Something about his Op aspect relates to the rather sensual Op art of Le Parc and his sense of juxtaposition has something to do with James Rosenquist. Early work suggested Marsden Hartley or Charles Burchfield, and Greene's spacial feeling carries through from the earliest work through a kind of Kandinsky period to the sequential airbrush work. Structurally he can be compared to Ben Nicholson, especially the one shown above, about 4x6 feet.

We've reproduced black and white India Ink air brush pre-paintings (they're about twice as big as you see here) but the paintings use color very interestingly and they're about 8 feet long.

The movement from left to right in the sphere painting has rhythmic similarities with the vertical sequences. Green says

he avoids the sphere approach now because he was not really involved with outer space, and that people tended to look at the work as objects or phenomena, instead of relating to the spacial sense.

"I make images that negate each other. A positive nihilism I guess...I'm not nihilistic though..." (That's the kind of painter's statement that's worth quoting—I'm beginning to hate artists who defend what they do on the basis of artist's prerogatives.) I told him I liked his use of airbrush, that it seemed to give the technique some point and he said "I suppose the thing is to use it as what it does rather than make it do something that's not really its nature."

Jack paints with oil on linen. Acrylic doesn't have the flexibility and cotton doesn't have the fineness. He primes with lead (Dutch Boy White) having sized with Rabbit's Skin Glue, since lead is a lean pigment and zinc or titanium are fatter. He's careful with oil indexes to avoid cracking.

As Jack was preparing his pictures for me to take (temperamentally he's like Kandinsky too: very neat and organized), his wife Marianne showed me their pad: in a storefront set up and Jack's carved big holes through the wall, so that his apartment resembles his work; a panel, a door, an area of wall with a big hole cut in it through which your eye jumps back to the bedroom door and through that! The "lady" refrigerator is painted so that it looks like a big fat tangible Miro-Kandinsky-Greene. If that sounds like a compliment, it is.

D.Y.A.