

“Mindfield”
Catherine Person Gallery, Seattle, WA
2008

For a long time I have been thinking about the extent to which what we see is governed by how we see – how memory and association might alter our perception of what lies in front of us.

While admiring a peony in my garden a couple of springs ago, I felt a rush of melancholia. This feeling seemed to be attached to a sense that things were poised on a threshold of precipitous change, that somehow the present spring would be the last in a line, and I would in the future find myself longing for the day I held the peony. The paintings in “Mindfield” derive from these two sources.

The flow of imagery, quotidian, lovely and terrible (sometimes all at once) that greet an individual who reads the paper, lives in the world and thinks about the impact of beauty in human experience is what is addressed in these works.

The paintings are made individually without a particular sequence in mind, though I am aware that the palette, application of paint, repeated forms and value relationships will, in the end, all have a story to tell. Each painting is done when it is done – sometimes I burn through dozens of possible images before feeling right about what ended up on the panel and sometimes paintings just happen in one go. Intuition guides the process and the trick is to get comfortable letting that happen.

I used photographic sources for most of these paintings. Many are composite images; a few are made up completely. The photos came from my camera, family photos (‘Yonder Lea’ was my grandparents’ house in Virginia). I also used internet and newspaper images; “Baby Blue Bikini” came courtesy of the New York Times in black and white but somehow suggested sweetness, even cotton candy.

What the installation is about can best be found between paintings, where one image might infect another and alter the story one tells to one’s self.

Linda Davidson