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Michael Goldberg

PALEY AND LOWE GALLERY

Michael Goldberg's linear gestures no longer register with Abstract Expressionist emotional intensity. He was a close de Kooning follower in the '50s, like Milton Resnick but not so consciously or so effectively. The counterinfluence of his teacher Hans Hofmann probably did a great deal to stabilize Goldberg's imagery. He has undergone the most stylistic change of the three artists. In this year's show at Paley and Lowe he has moved into opulent vertical configurations in gold and dark green which have a self-consciously screenlike appearance. They are oddly reminiscent of turn-of-the-century Viennese decorative screens by the Jugendstil artists. Like last year's meandering neuron pathways between cellular blocks in metallic hues (some of which were included in the current show), the new work glitters coldly. His break with his former Abstract Expressionist influences seems the most complete of the artists thus far discussed.

However, all three artists remain involved with Abstract Expressionist improvisatory techniques and automatist procedures. Their morphologies have continuing Surrealist overtones. It was precisely these reverberations that the majority of "third-generation" American artists of the '60s tried to eradicate from their work. During this time logic and formal consistency were paramount. Painters were usually either in favor of a firm, up front Constructivism derived from Neoplasticism via Newman or Reinhardt or they were into a gentle, quiet painterliness derived from Rothko. Only a few "third-generation" painters worked within a Constructivist framework while retaining some traces of automatic Expressionist procedures. Al Held, with his numerous palimpsests recording changes, is one such artist, as is Budd Hopkins with his obsessive areas of loose brushwork.

—April Kingsley