

## Christopher French: *As the Land and the Air Is*

Holly Johnson Gallery  
1411 Dragon Street, Dallas

**F**irst impressions aren't everything, and if the work of Christopher French is viewed online or from a distance, one will miss the happy subtleties that *As the Lands and the Air Is* conveys.

Upon first glance the work of Mr. French appears to be another artist exploring the formalities of art. But upon closer inspection, the artist's work moves, dances even, as the colors glisten and shapes groove in unison. Holly Johnson Gallery presents two different bodies of work, *T-Top Paintings* and *Color Culture*, but both are unified as the artist explores the duality of textual and textural concepts. For *T-Top Paintings*, Mr. French's utilizes the top shape of the T from the iconic nameplate of the *New York Times*. Dynamic is a term that comes to mind when viewing works like *Evening's Empire* and *Tracing a Part Back to My Green Island*. The methodical placement on canvas of the simple, curved forms and color palette, which includes iridescent paints and glittering texture, invites the viewer to step closer, stay a while and contemplate the story that Mr. French is trying to tell us.

A wordsmith in his own right, Mr. French writes for art publications such as *ARTnews* and *Glasstire*, to name a few, and it is the notion of vocabulary, language, and art that Mr. French is most interested in. *Color Culture*, the other body of work at Holly Johnson Gallery, exhibits paintings using various sizes of circles, meticulously painted on Braille paper. Three paintings titled *Remains of the Day*, with different dates, record the days in different colors and patterns, even though they appear to be organized in the same manner. It's ironic that Mr. French incorporates Braille paper in his works, a tool used for the visually impaired, because the visual communication of his work is aesthetically pleasing and the narrative of events, time passing, and process is delightful to imagine.

There is more to the work of Mr. French than meets the eye. An optical illusionist, in the best sense of the word, Mr. French creates quiet works of beauty that sing to the simplicity of elements. If you let it, it will speak directly to you.

— Lydia Regalado



Christopher French, *Burn Notice*, acrylic on birch plywood panel, 60" x 60", 2009

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