

the interplay between patterns and linear renderings as suggestive of social space.) This area—the closest to the feet of the viewer—may allude to a floor, vestigial stage set, viewing platform or liminal meeting ground. The silver zone's quietude is met by the painterly fierceness that occurs above it. Drizzling skeins of silver paint (evoking the work of Pat Steir) enhance the sensation of interlocked repetition engaged with flowing incoherence, and further energizes a painting already in hyperdrive.

In the small back gallery, the errant arabesque forms and sketchlike paint handling of *Freak Out* (2004) embodied Burton's intentions, expressed in a notebook in 1999, to "give structure to structurelessness/form to formlessness." Three paintings

ence. In the early '90s, Row worked with abutted rectangular canvases onto which he painted curved bands immersed in planes of scarred, variegated surfaces that seemed to spur a kind of centrifugal movement. His use of astringently pretty colors, such as acidic pink and lime green, pushed the paintings toward a kind of industrial picturesque. Later in the decade it became more common for him to juxtapose his painted fields within one continuous rectangular support. These pictures feature interlocking areas of photographic blurriness and dragged paint applied upon smeared ovals and ribbon-like marks.

The overall sensation Row's work produces is of a speedy muscularity. His aggressive cropping is reminiscent of the rapid



David Row: *Waves of Desire*, 2004, oil on canvas, 72 by 108 inches; at Von Lintel.

once, by applying a tangerine-colored field with a wide, flat knife. Calligraphic turquoise loops, one step removed from graffiti, thread their way across the horizontal plane as they partially obscure a paler echo of themselves. This doubling rhymes with the doubling of the large plane behind the two sets of loopy marks. A kind of low-frequency visual buzz is introduced by a silk-screened dot pattern. Used in some but not all of the new paintings, this device seems to embed the stiff, elongated gestures in faux texture.

Underpainting is visible in all the paintings in the show, reminding us that Row's main debt is to Cubism's transparent planes. There are moments in many of the works where the color seems set out on the canvas simply to be bathed in light. Row's previous scrapings, croppings and abutted canvases now seem discardable devices on potential the way to what are his first genuinely open paintings. —Joe Fyfe

### Bill Henson at Robert Miller

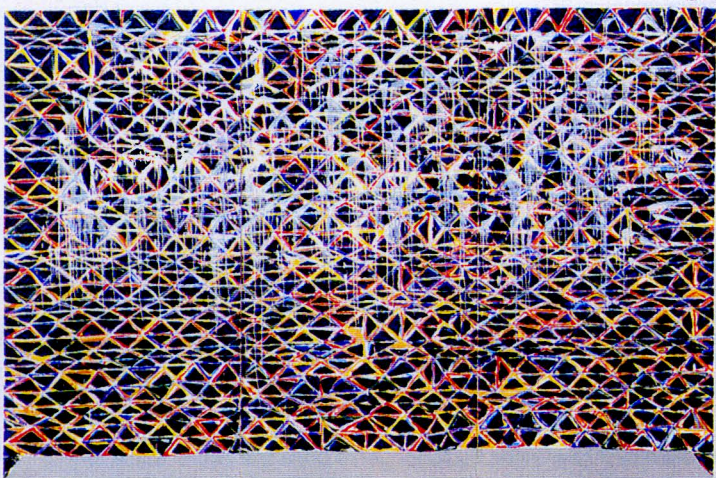
Bill Henson is one of the best known and most widely exhibited artists in Australia. He was that nation's representative at the 1995 Venice Biennale, and his gallery in Sydney is Roslyn Oxley9, which also shows the work of fellow Australian photographer Tracey Moffatt. Moffatt, however, has achieved wider international recognition than Henson, at least until recently. Two years ago, a collection of his work, *Lux et Nox*, was published by Scalo, and last winter, he had his first solo exhibition in New York at Robert Miller Gallery. This included 18 type-C nocturnal photographs from the

past five years, showing beautiful, disaffected teenagers in quasi-industrial landscapes, or views of the landscapes alone.

Henson's subjects are transitional in more ways than one. His settings are the edges of cities, liminal places that can be read as either threatening or intensely seductive. His lonely, languid teenagers—drinking, having sex—are caught between youth and adulthood; they look troubled, though not irretrievably lost. Larry Clark's kids come to mind, but there's something more ambiguous about Henson's teenagers, who seem to be alienated children of suburbia rather than ravaged runaways. In fact, ambiguity seems to be the point of his pictures.

Henson has said that what's not visible in his photographs is just as important as what is. In these works, which are large in scale (50 by 71 inches) and flawlessly printed, the shadows are as important as the people, who seem always on the verge of being swallowed by the encroaching darkness, or else retreating into its protective cover. One image shows a young girl with wet hair standing in the dark. Her thin body fills the frame, and she holds her arms protectively in front of her; except for the neon gas-station sign glowing behind her and off to the side, she could be in the middle of nowhere.

Henson photographs the power lines, train tracks and highway underpasses of his landscapes with an eye to their painterly qualities. One thinks of contemporary photographers like Philip-Lorca diCorcia, with his expertly lit, decontextualized portraits, or Gregory Crewdson's eerie suburbs. Henson himself



Richmond Burton: *Pleace*, 2004, oil on canvas, 6 by 9 feet; at Cheim & Read.

installed in the front gallery, dependant as they are on the Burtonian syntax, which encourages a clash between implacable repetition and distortion, containment and release, looked forthrightly biomorphic and languorous in character. The blossomlike shapes in *Unflower* and *Solex* (both 2003) seem to swell toward the sky, while the winged form in *Idoasis* (2004) appears caught in glare during an interrupted night flight.

—Dominique Nahas

### David Row at Von Lintel

David Row has spent over 20 years devising abstract paintings that seek to capture the tenor and grit of contemporary experi-

editing of MTV and action movies. Another painter of Row's generation, David Salle, once said that his own paintings were over when the viewer turned away from them. Row's paintings, by contrast, are always on. The viewer almost has to catch them as they roar by. Row's most recent paintings still have some of this quality but they are less frenetic and more luminous. This appears to be the result of his acceptance of the unity of the rectangle; he no longer breaks up the picture into independent painted areas.

In the 72-by-108-inch *Waves of Desire*, for example, Row paints a slightly smaller, semi-opaque version of the rectangular support within the picture plane only