

# **MFA Painting/ Printmaking 2009**

**Yale University School of Art**

# Catalog of the work of

Scott Andresen  
Daphne Arthur  
Whitney Claflin  
David Antonio Cruz  
Dylan DeWitt  
Richard Galling  
Justin Kuhn  
Catherine Chiao-Ju Lan  
Billie Lee  
Benjamin Lindquist  
Kate Mangold  
Hector Mendoza  
Amy Morse  
Mary Reid Kelley  
Cuyler Remick  
Alan Ruiz  
Leslie Smith III  
Maggie Sullivan  
Jaret Vadera  
Katayoun Vaziri  
Stefanie Victor  
Didier William

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Anna Arabindan-Kesson  
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Esther Chadwick  
Daniel Greenberg  
Adrianne Hamilton  
Sylvia Houghteling  
Joy Jeehye Kim  
Marika Knowles  
Catherine Chiao-Ju Lan  
Amy Morse  
Susanna Newbury  
Mary Dailey Pattee  
Max Rosenberg  
Alexandra Dika Seggerman  
Holly Shaffer  
Allison Stielau  
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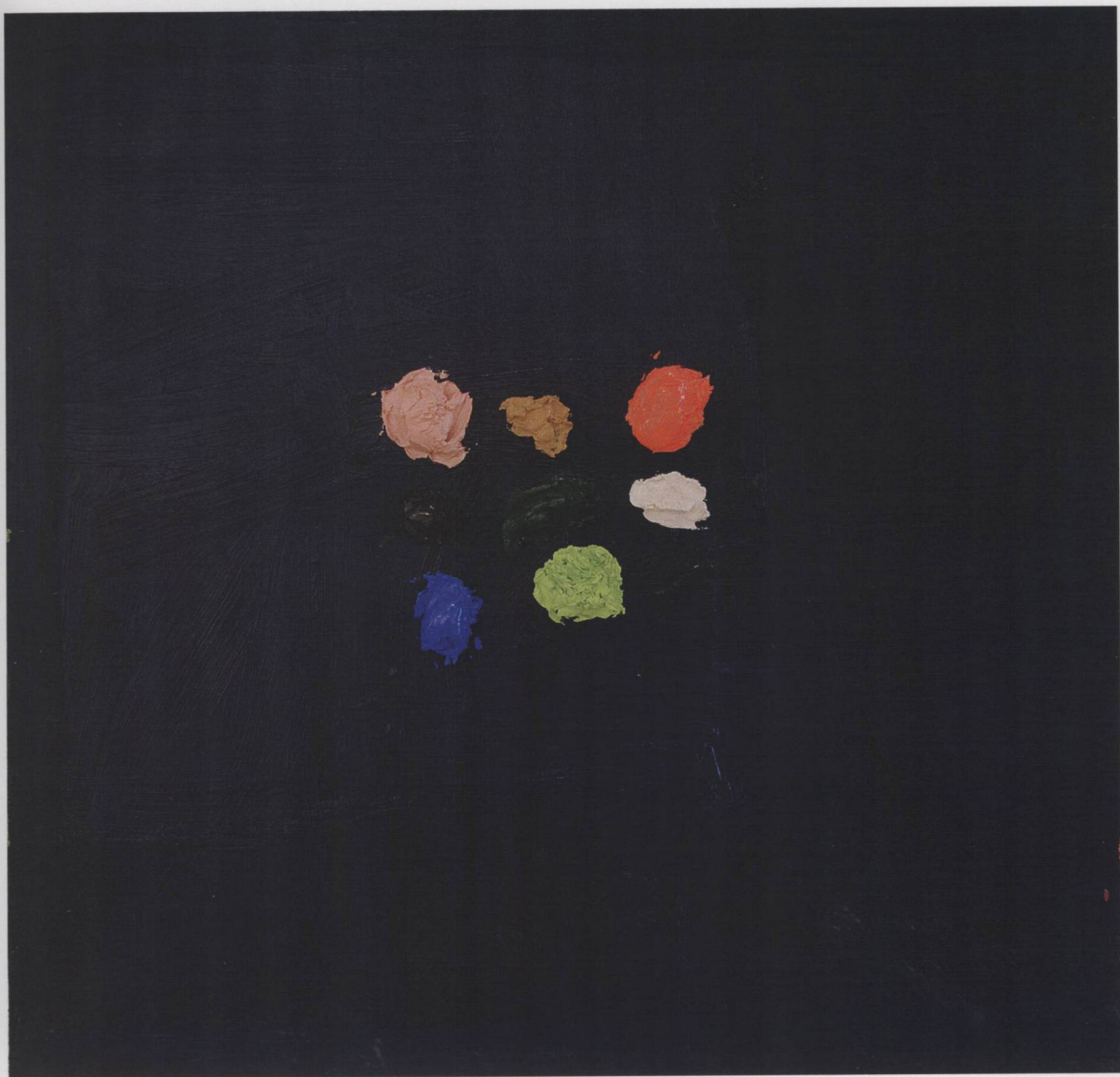
# Benjamin

Lindquist

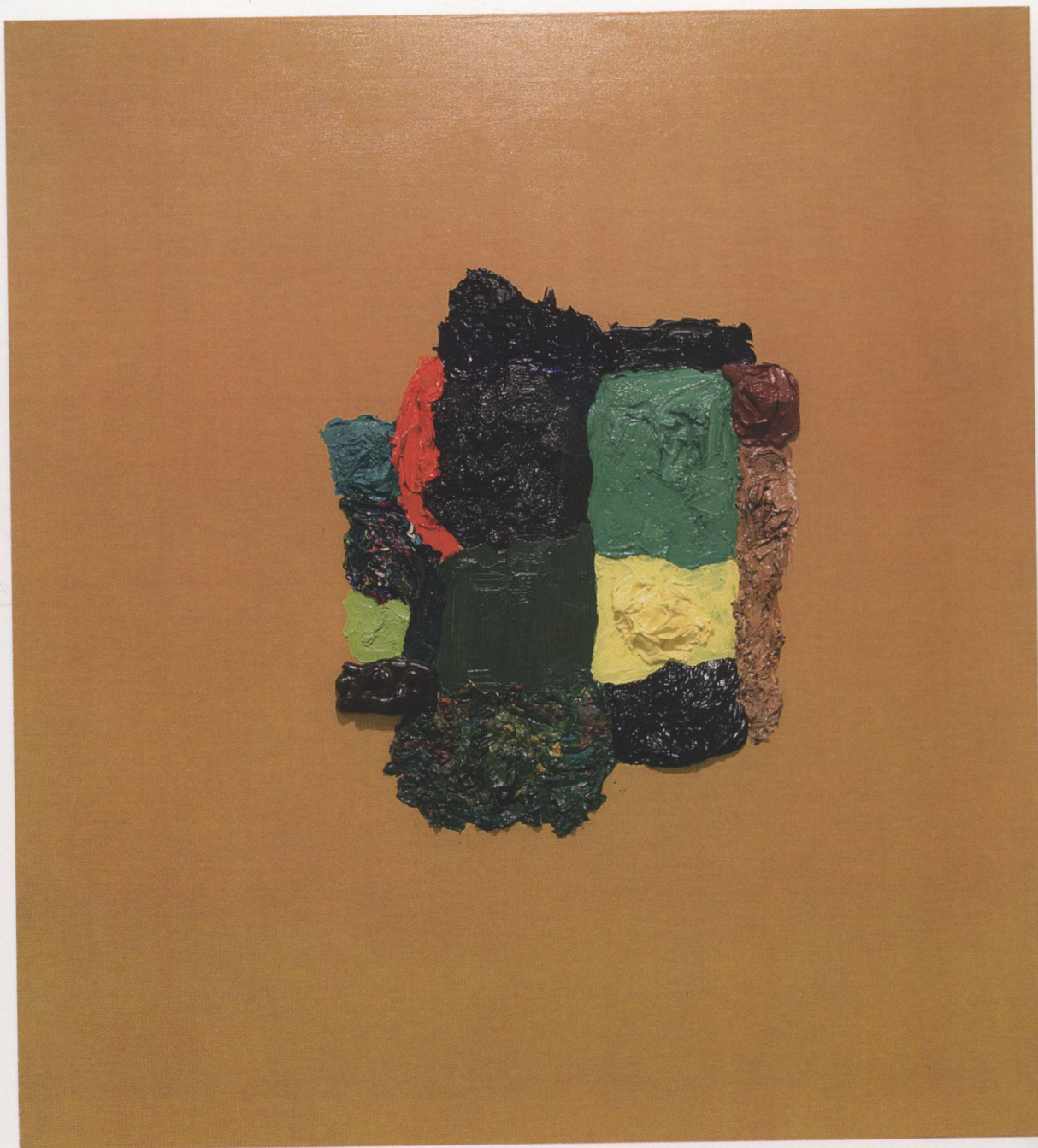










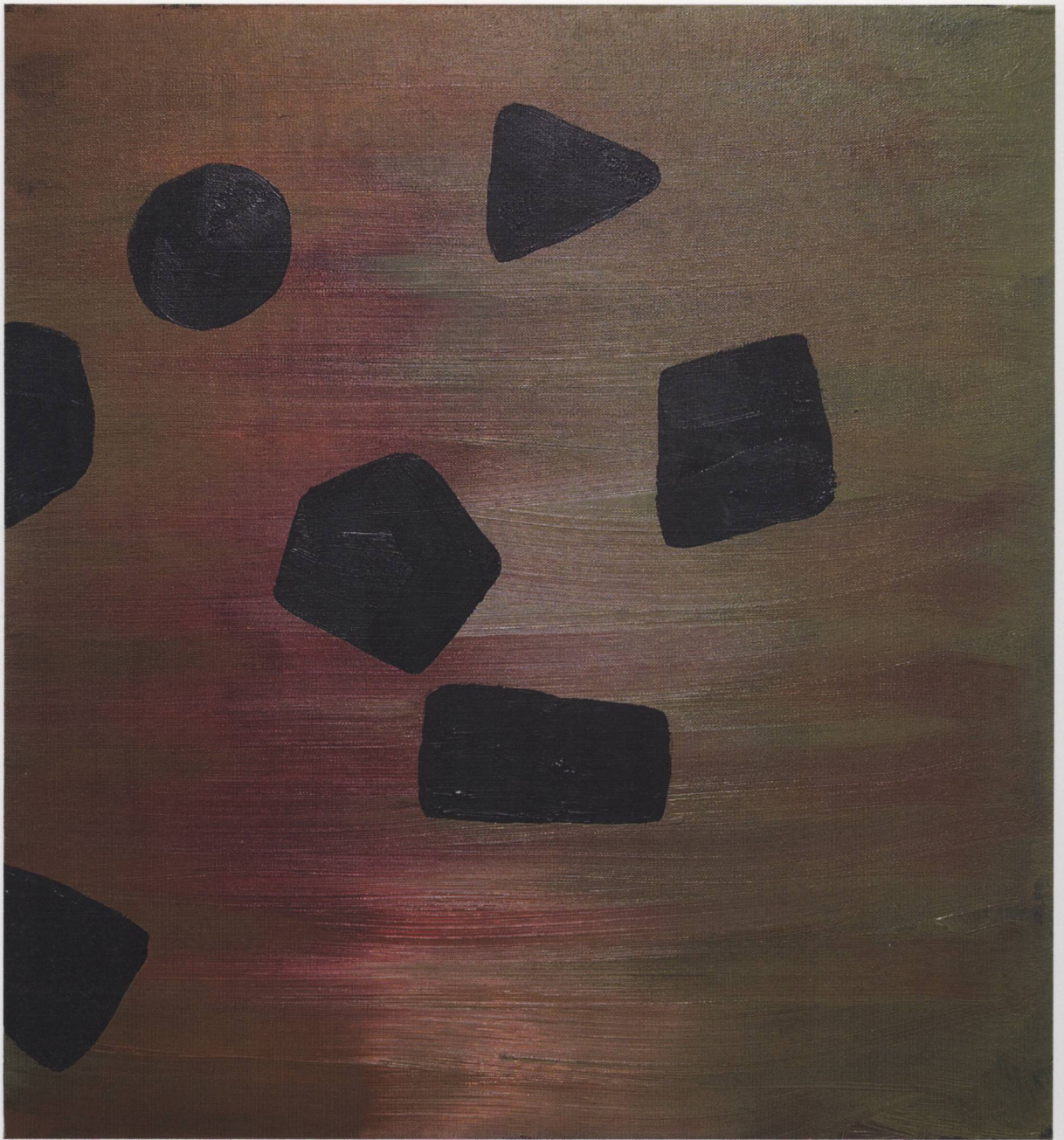




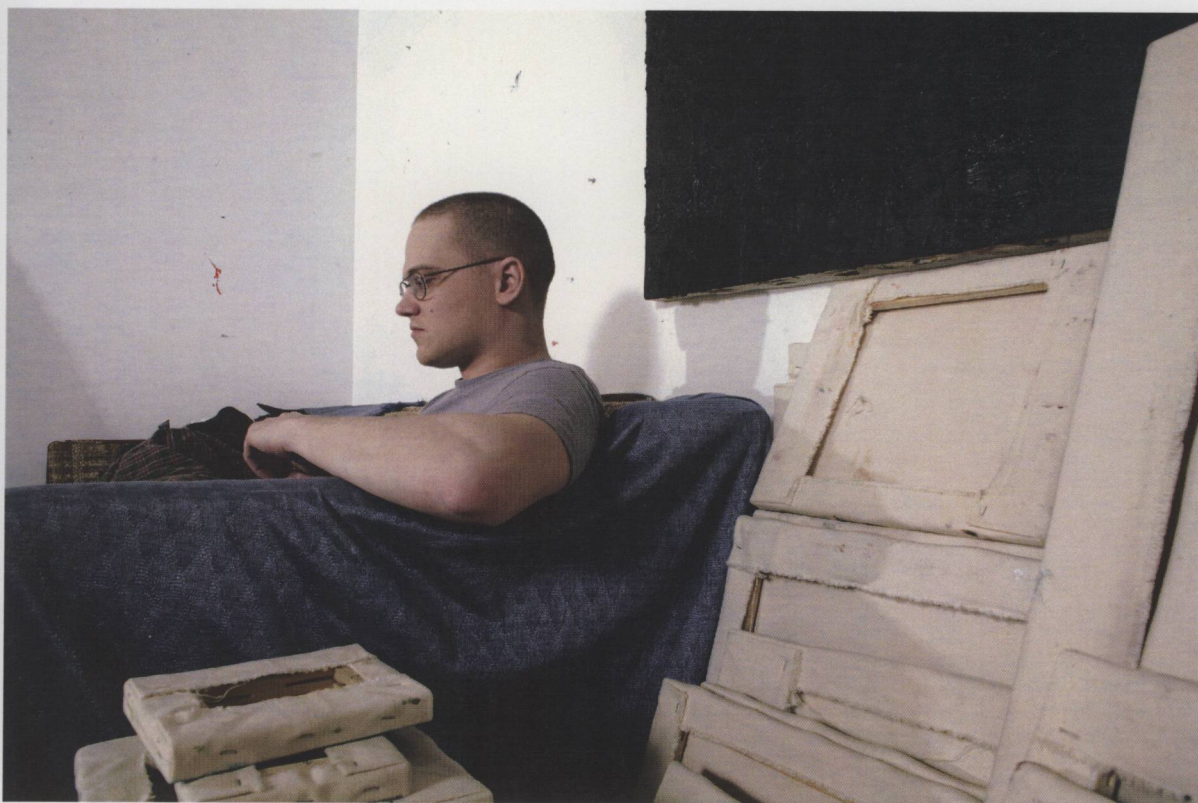


Benjamin Lindquist









**Benjamin Lindquist's** paintings are as sticky to the eye as their surfaces, paint still drying, would be to the hand. Their chunky facture led one colleague to joke recently that the artist paints "like he's laying sod, or icing a cake." Indeed, Lindquist builds up paint so thickly in places that it almost transubstantiates, becoming the materials it might in other works merely represent: clotted lipstick shafts, smeared mustard, the mud of a drying roadside puddle. Texture, and the gestures that create it, is one of Lindquist's central subjects. Color, and how color brings the illusion of light to the painted surface, is another.

The two come together stunningly in *Grass with Rainbow*, in which a swath of primary colors cuts across green turbulence to effect the visionary light of a mandorla. Agitated paint—Lindquist's signature "grass"—overtakes the majority of the canvas, concentric circles of brushwork pulsing out from the center as if within a helicopter's downdraft. The rusty glow of modulated red and gold in the upper right corner contrasts with the rainbow's bright stripes, depicting the radiance that a conventionalized rainbow can only symbolize.

The artist has said that his work is not about big ideas, that it makes no large claims. While his abstractions do not represent a world outside of themselves, they certainly suggest elements of the world we know, or the world as we have seen it represented elsewhere. The lime quadrangle of *Grass Outlined with Green* appears to frame a spot of reflective pond water Impressionistically. In *Grass with Rainbow Grass*, that spot is magnified, becomes a surface on which to float a further magnified and scrambled image whose colored tumult is so tacky it catches our gaze,

transforming the representational game to a painterly one. In these works, our eyes must toggle back and forth not only between wittily juxtaposed figure and ground, but also between representation and abstraction; between seeing, for example, a horizon line at sunset and mere bands of color. In these unresolved tensions, Lindquist's paintings force us continually, joyfully, to relearn how color, form and texture combine to achieve light and space.

That gift of fresh eyes is often described vaguely as "reenchantment," but Lindquist's paintings are too full of muck and grass and toxic light for such a fairy-dusted description. Instead, they perform a subtler, more painful, and ultimately more astonishing operation, something akin to physical rehabilitation. That enterprise of laying down neural pathways and growing muscle mass reminds the body by connecting action to thought once again, the physical to what we might have begun to assume was immaterial. By stripping bare the processes beneath movement and communication, rehabilitation calls attention, if momentarily, to the radical, miraculous fact of our being able to walk and talk, let alone sing and dance, at all.

In their optical obstacle courses, Lindquist's works do not teach us to see so much as remind us that we can, endowing us once again with the mental and physical abilities of sight. In so doing, they demonstrate the vital capacities of their medium. Here is an argument both for painting's continued relevance and for the necessity of slow, unmediated close looking. That's a rather larger claim than this admirably modest artist would admit to. Still, it sticks.

Allison Stielau