

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Roberta Smith, "What to See Right Now in New York Art Galleries: Salvo," *The New York Times*, February 20, 2020

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ART REVIEWS

What to See Right Now in New York Art Galleries



Salvo's "Aprile" (2000), one of the landscapes by this Italian artist at the Gladstone 64 gallery. Credit...Archivio Salvo; via Gladstone Gallery

Salvo

Through Feb. 29. Gladstone 64, 130 East 64th Street, Manhattan, 212-753-2200, gladstonegallery.com.

The Italian artist who called himself Salvo (1947-2015) is known in this country — when he is known at all — for his affiliation with his country's Arte Povera movement, which tended toward the sculptural and conceptual. But that phase was

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brief — 1968-1972. Salvo was first and last a painter, as attested by this gorgeous show of 14 paintings from 1980 to 2009. They are small and tautly composed, with radiant colors and chiseled forms; the word “gems” applies with an unusual, unhackneyed precision. Although celebrated in Europe, Salvo the painter has had only two gallery solos in New York, at Gladstone in 1986 and Ierimonti in 2016.

Unafraid of the past, Salvo (born Salvatore Mangione) copied Early and High Renaissance masters and mythological scenes. The paintings at Gladstone, which have boxy houses, curvaceous clouds and cotton candy trees, draw on the simplified forms of the early-20th-century paintings of Giorgio de Chirico and Carlo Carrà and Kazimir Malevich’s topsy-turvy Cubo-Futurist experiments, although nothing moves except the light. Salvo’s surfaces are smooth, his edges crisp, his palette borderline fluorescent. Weirdly, this extreme artifice seems geared to make the light look real. We watch it fade into different colors, like the pink to yellow to lavender transition of the carefully sculpted clouds of “Aprile” (“April”). It will be great to learn about Salvo’s other paintings, but those here are exquisitely timed for a moment when many painters are mining early Modernist styles for ways to fuel their new faith in representation.