

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Roberta Smith, "Richard Aldrich,"
The New York Times, March 4, 2016

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Art in Review

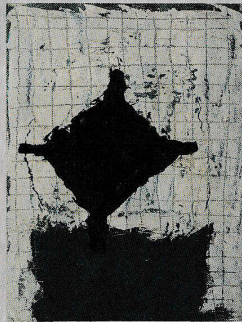
Richard Aldrich

'Time Stopped, Time Started'

Gladstone Gallery
515 West 24th Street, Chelsea
Through Saturday

Richard Aldrich takes a broad view of painting. He makes his work out of almost anything — even Bruce Springsteen lyrics — and by any method. His art runs the gamut from hands-on to conceptual, from irreverent elegance to pretentious opacity. In other words, while he is clearly an exceptional painter, he can be uneven.

Mr. Aldrich's ecumenicalism and inconsistency are most apparent when he has numerous works on display, as in "Time Stopped, Time Started," his show



RICHARD ALDRICH AND GLADSTONE GALLERY,
NEW YORK AND BRUSSELS

"Untitled, 2013-2014" by
Richard Aldrich, in his show
"Time Stopped, Time
Started," at Gladstone.

of 22 paintings and painting-related objects at the Gladstone Gallery.

It opens with a lush painterly abstraction whose bobbing shapes of color seem cozy and French, like the corner of an Édouard Vuillard painting, greatly enlarged. Beside it hangs a nearly bare canvas with a green flower pot, above which a tangle of ghostly lines intimate flowers, a window and an outdoor garden. It's a nod to the modern still life as a vehicle to abstraction. Next comes a small panel work painted with awkward sincerity, muted colors and a few scratches — a recurring formula here, also seen in a piece dedicated to "Friend of Paul Klee."

Among the emptier-looking paintings, one that slowly becomes beautiful has been covered with a repeating image printed on white cards — applied with great care and forethought — and then dotted with shard-like pieces of ceramic. Another is simultaneously satirical and devotional, featuring only two paint-splattered blocks of wood, like those typical of painters' studios. Mr. Aldrich allows nothing to be taken for granted. Each work asks the same question — Is this a painting? — but with a different argument. His shows are invigorating, even though individual works may fail.

ROBERTA SMITH