

Art in America

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Bosco Sodi at Neuhoff

Mexican-born artist Bosco Sodi, now living in Barcelona, paints thickly encrusted canvases, mainly with broad, roughly edged striations arrayed in verticals across the canvas. Sodi builds up the surface by painting over an accumulation of materials: wood pulp, sawdust, fibers taken from various woods, pigment, glue and iron dust. The title of this show, "organic topologies," not to mention the surfaces of the canvases, which have the presence and depth of reliefs, reminds the viewer of the work of Antoni Tàpies, one of Sodi's favorite artists.

The physicality of these colorful canvases holds and sustains the light illuminating them. In one very large, majestic untitled painting of 2005 (110 by 79 inches), broad, bright red stripes cascade downward, separated by thinner gaps filled with a deeper red, encompassing a lyrical world of pure color. The brighter stripes feel as though they have been lit from within, much as the colors of Rothko suggest depth and illumination from behind the paint. Also reminiscent of Rothko is a contemplative spirituality that gains in profoundness as the viewer spends time with the works. Their



View of two untitled works in Bosco Sodi's exhibition, both 2005, mixed mediums on canvas, at Neuhoff.

rows of broad stripes contribute to a sense of order even though the surfaces are so materially miscellaneous.

Another untitled painting from 2005 (71 by 71 inches) shows a series of repeating stripes that end a couple of inches above the bottom of the canvas. The stripes are alternately thick and thin, painted in a light, yellow-green color set off from the darker green of the ground. Encrustations of paint give the work a massive

effect, and the vertical forms might almost be sentinels guarding a great secret. In another mixed media work on canvas, also a square (59 by 59 inches), four thick, off-white, nearly cream-colored stripes alternate with thinner stripes of a pure white. The imagery is similar to that in the rest of Sodi's show, encouraging peaceful reflection.

-Jonathan Goodman