

Corey Antis

What happens if we look at an art work with no sign posts? What do we use as guidelines when no guidelines are given to what we are looking at and what it is supposed to be? How does the art itself give us clues to determine its meaning?

That's the nature of abstract art in general, but even more specifically with the work of Corey Antis. He knows that literal reproductions of objects often makes our eyes - and the mind - see too fast. Corey Antis' work challenges us to, as he puts it, "see things more slowly." He has reflected deeply on the fact that how we look at objects, and the spaces between the objects, comes from places and influences we can't always consciously identify.

In *Untitled 03*, our eyes quickly recognize that this is not a literal representation of anything identifiable. The way most minds work - trying to fit it in a slot of existing familiarity - we might see something like hieroglyphics or sheet music against the predominantly black background. Looking closer, we realize that's not it either. Keep looking. Circular and rectangular forms are visible amid an array of squiggly, jagged marks. The lines and shapes, with their uneven spacing, appear purposeful but the markings aren't a pattern or design meant to take you some place familiar.

In describing his own process, Antis says: "I want my work to measure the gap between what a form seems to be and the speed of how it is read and understood." Antis' use of ink on paper increases the preciseness of the image, which ironically, renders the overall work as more enigmatic. But whether we are looking up close or from a distance, balancing the light and dark, the details and the whole merge as they do with *Untitled 04*.

In this variation of ink and collage on paper we see a whole, active scene obscured by vertical strips of white. The ground layer provides a dark mottled texture while gray washes of ink bleed through to the surface sometimes overlapping the top layer. Instead of a central point of focus we sense the visual tension between the ground and surface.

Though Antis doesn't mind us bringing perceptions and theories to his art, in this series he asks us to examine our relationship with space. "The way that we inhabit space has a lot to do with how we represent space," Antis says. Collage and ink are perfect mediums for exploring that relationship.

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