

ARTSLANT

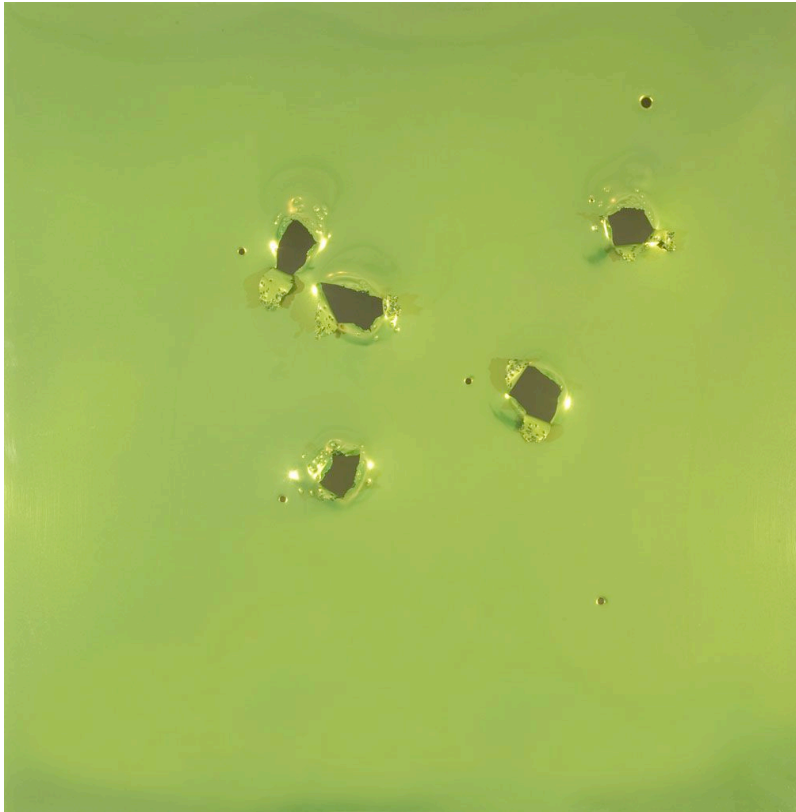
Time Bomb

Margaret Evangeline

Stux Gallery

530 W. 25th St. New York, NY 10001

January 5, 2012 – February 4, 2012



Margaret Evangeline, *Bridesmaid* (2010), gunshot powder-coated stainless steel; Courtesy STUX Gallery.

Ticky Tock

by Noah Dillon

Margaret Evangeline's new show of paintings, "Time Bomb" at STUX, is difficult. Not only so for its content, which is jostling, fun, and borderline crude, but also because of the peculiar hand that Evangeline has honed since the late 1970s. Her output is varied and always charged. But that power doesn't leap off every canvas in the way she may intend—instead of being liberated they can be anxious or stiff. The overall structure of a given painting can slide into a hash of overwrought marks. Some of the works appear to consciously nod to this dilemma, and there they succeed more.

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Evangeline's gestural, abstract oil paintings really titillate when one connects the title. *Time Bomb* (2011) looks like it is about to explode. In it, a pewter gray field has been embedded with lines twisted into a grenade-like shape. The thickly-globbed paint is nervous, threatening to burst or collapse at any moment.

The six-by-nine foot *Rehabilitation of Evel Knievel* (2011) strikes a similarly playful, gory tone. An atmospheric haze of broad gray strokes is soiled by a dripping, curling, anthropomorphic skid mark in red and gold. It is flecked with dried chunks of paint and the asphalt grays of the background are similarly crusty, despite runny droplets congealed at the bottom of the canvas. Some horrible event occurred here; no doubt, the stuntman has just been carried away as a shredded lump of flesh.

The paintings are bodily and rich, but worriedly wander when they get high-minded in works such as *Diamond In Your Mind* (2011) or *Fool For Love* (2011).

Included here are some new gunshot paintings, wherein the artist has blown holes into powder-coated steel plates with weapons of varying caliber. But they are somehow removed from the mad masculinity of similar acts by Hunter Thompson or William Burroughs. Most of them are named for Saint Sebastian, a 3rd century martyr pierced by arrows whose semi-nude icon has become a symbol of homoerotic desire. The convolutions of Evangeline's gunshots are complex, though the images are simple (save for their swirling reflections). She exhibits empathy through an act of violence, both empowering and condemning. Anxious blasts and bombast are where her art is most compelling.