

**Jules Langsner papers**  
**Box 2, Folder 51**

**Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution**

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CATALOG INTRODUCTION,  
FERUS GALLERY, LOS ANGELES  
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This exhibition signals the emergence of a painter of genuine stature. Robert Craig Kauffman's recent paintings possess that indefinable (yet indisputable) singularity found only in the work of the gifted artist creatively his own man.

An easy assurance pervades these crisp and buoyant abstract paintings - the assurance that comes with the command of a personal style exactly congruent with a very personal reaction to sensation and experience. The measure of the success of these paintings does not reside simply in the fact they express the Kauffman sensibility. More particularly they communicate that sensibility. A corner of ourselves sensed only dimly before suddenly is illuminated, recognized, and felt as an immediate and vivid presence.

The presence felt immediately and vividly in the Kauffman paintings is that of a pristine delight, a refreshing sense of exhilaration. Here organic shapes spring into life as if enchanted to be alive. A sinuous line contains and connects these shapes, rhythmically flowing in space as if fulfilling an inner necessity of its being. Enclaves of clear and vibrant hues advance and recede from a cool surface as if bursting with joie de vivre.

This lyricism is convincing because the work evidences no sign of being worked at. It has the freshness of a lyric by Wordsworth, and the artist might well have pinned on his <sup>studio</sup> ~~studio~~ wall the observation of the poet, "The human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulents".

The Kauffman paintings are a pleasure to behold. The pursuit of the pleasure principle in painting has become warped in the minds of some people to signify lack of seriousness in the artist. It is a point of view which takes painting, not seriously, but solemnly. Kauffman is a serious artist, never solemn, and his work always a pleasure to behold.

Jules Langsner