



John Evans, *Botanical Garden Pool (3)*, 2011, oil on canvas, 72" x 96".
Gallery Henoch.

John Evans

Gallery Henoch

In this exhibition, John Evans, a Boston-based painter known for tranquil landscapes of Cape Cod, upstate New York, and central France, intermingled five paintings of botanical-garden pools with his familiar vistas of leisure

destinations. The angular strokes that usually depict gradients of light in horizons at twilight and on surfaces on lakes also show up in these garden pools, with a similar blocky application created by a printmaking brayer.

These paintings, which recall Monet's water-lily canvases, display inventiveness and complexity. While the jagged divisions of land in *Field with Cottage in Beynac* (2010) suggest a comely variation on a Richard Diebenkorn suburban cityscape and the spatial arrangement of *Menemsha* (2010) resembles a Whistler seascape, *Botanical Garden Pool (3)*, 2011, establishes a closer perspective on a diversity of flora, demonstrating various modes of depiction. The cubistic pixel-like strokes lend a messy, enigmatic quality to these botanicals. In addition, the pools' reflections are less seen than recognized in our mind's eye and are differentiated only by overlays of contrasting colors, as in *Botanical Garden Pool (2)*, 2011.

But as vegetation metamorphoses in these paintings from recognizable plant life toward abstraction and gesture, Evans seems to be questioning the ethos of the botanical garden itself. Rather than being simply a shaped and controlled ecological habitat for the enjoyment of nature, it is also a site of erosion and environmental destruction. It is that tension that animates these paintings and generates their emotional resonance.

—Greg Lindquist