

Richmond Arts Review

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AURA

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“Much like music, color is a language of mood,” states [Julian Jackson](#), whose *Aura* paintings are presently on view at Page Bond Gallery. It is the textural flatness and the way Jackson diffuses oil paint on wood or canvas so that it obtains a vaporous and vibrating quality, which allows color an opportunity to speak its language. Rothko’s colorfield paintings come to mind, though where Rothko’s paint is sucked in by the canvas in an emotional recoil, Jackson’s surfaces nudge the color forward.

In *House from the River* (2011) oil paint has been applied in Jackson's signature fashion, to a smoothed wood panel which hovers slightly away from the wall. There is a glimpse of the play of sunlight through wind-shifting trees, reflected sky and window glass, but only because he directed us with the title. Without a narrative focus the painting is another in a series of unfixed explorations of aura, and color, as vibrating energy and light that can be sensed as much as seen.

Aura 3 – Stillness (2011, 82 x 72 in) undermines the intellectual concept of “stillness” to arrive at a more complex understanding that the eye, which is always moving and breathing light cannot fathom stillness at all. Gradations of white and grey allow subtle flashes of blue; blue speaks calmness or tranquility, white of simplicity. But such interpretations only grasp at an emotional ephemera. These paintings change every time you look at them.

Julian Jackson's Aura is on view at [Page Bond Gallery](#) through October 29.

Image: *Aura 2 – Midnight*, courtesy of Page Bond Gallery and the artist.