

enamel on metal, yielding a shiny, glasslike surface. In *Heavy Metal* (2011), the artist depicts a pair of high heels stomping in a rainy puddle of silver. It is the antithesis of a fashion shot, especially alongside its double, *Meltdown* (2011), in which the splash renders the shoes nearly invisible. In both these works, it is difficult to believe the precision with which Minter captures these messy moments, creating images that challenge conventional notions of beauty. —*Barbara Pollack*

Melora Griffis

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Titled “wings and murmurs,” this show of Melora Griffis’s haunting paintings, ranging from postcard-size to more than five feet tall, was devoted mainly to portraits,



Melora Griffis, *unsichtbar*, 2011, oil on linen, 46" x 30".
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with abstract elements frequently encroaching on the canvases. An effective example here of the artist’s experimental figuration was an oil-on-linen work titled *unsichtbar* (2011). The large painting depicts a presumably young woman in a

white dress seated with arms folded in her lap and Mary Jane-clad feet crossed demurely at the ankles. An empty white expanse obliterates her face, as if the beholder’s recollection is foggy and the sitter’s identity—or imagined character—can’t be recalled. Most intriguingly, the figure appears at once to be emerging and disappearing.

In acrylic, gouache, and pastel on paper, *empty room* (2010) illustrates a space crowded with antique furniture. The walls, seats, corner of the room, and even the legs of a solitary male figure in a military uniform have been obscured by horizontal brushstrokes in opaque whites. Here Griffis seems to be ad-

ressing erasure as a painterly action, and in terms of any implied narrative, the results are as austere as they are fertile.

Griffis’s professed influences, such as George Grosz and Otto Dix, were much in evidence, and some of the artist’s emotional portraits could well be compared with those of contemporaries Chantal Joffe and Tabboo!. With their blurred edges and dramatic use of color, Griffis’s works conveyed the impression that memories and retellings can be strangely cloaked and yet, nevertheless, poignant.

—*Doug McClelland*

Cornelia Thomsen

Erik Thomsen Asian Art

Cornelia Thomsen’s fascination with stripes puts her in the company of Agnes Martin, Antonio Calderara, Barnett Newman, and Gerhard Richter, among many other moderns and post-moderns. However, the strength of Thomsen’s mesmerizing black, gray, and blue vertical lines is



Cornelia Thomsen, *Stripes Nr. 13*, 2011,
oil on canvas, 47 1/2" x 31 1/2". Erik Thomsen Asian Art.

found not only in their formal properties, but also in their ability to provoke viewers to peek behind the beautiful, precise minimalist curtain and speculate as to what lies beyond. With blue dominating, the images naturally conjure associations with the sea and sky and suggest unfathomable dimensions.

Orderly yet not quite symmetrical, Thomsen’s works require close viewing to see the barely perceptible differences in the thickness of the bands. These minute variations alter the overall mood from painting to painting and give each work a sense of fluidity.

By eschewing representation, Thomsen’s works encourage simple and direct appreciation of the basics—color and line. Colors ordinarily experienced quickly and then forgotten here demand lengthy observation. Lines that would typically create shapes and movement maintain their neutrality, simplicity, and directness.

In Thomsen’s paintings, the lighter colors take on a glow. By comparing *Stripes Nr. 13* (all 2011) with *Stripes Nr. 14* and *Stripes Nr. 15*, one can detect subtle changes. But behind the variations is a palpable sense of the hand that created the works. —*Valerie Gladstone*