



"Untitled" by Shane Tolbert

The Talk of Montauk Lands in Houston

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Even before he spent a residency this summer out in Montauk, at the tip of Long Island's South Fork, Houston artist Shane Tolbert was already drawing comparisons to one of its most famous former residents: Jackson Pollack.

The father of the Abstract Expressionist movement could be seen in the splashes of Tolbert's earlier work and his large canvases. And while in a solo show now up at Bill's Junk in the Heights, Tolbert has traded big sprawling canvases for ones that would easily fit in a suitcase, the shadow of Pollack is even more evident.

From the 19 works he created during his residency at the Edward Albee Foundation in Montauk, Tolbert has six up on display here in the show, titled "Talk of Montauk," as well as an additional three not on the walls but available for looking. They are a colorful lot, from the dotty *Pastels Found at Dusk*, which looks like the clean pixels of a bright light, to an untitled piece that verges on resembling an artist's palette, a mix of peach and sky blue and forest green and black. *Two Columns Understanding Their Own History* is even more splattered and carefree, while still maintaining a sense of deliberateness in each patch of color.



Tolbert also goes beyond messy splotches and incorporates shapes into his small canvases. There are the triangles of *Picture 13: Currents*, which look like rows of orderly sailboats on swift ocean currents. The sails are a parade of calming colors beyond the standard white, painted against a less orderly, almost violent background of blood red and black. In



"Picture 13: Currents" by Shane Tolbert

Montauk at Night, one of the paintings not up on display, Tolbert depicts what I assume are stars done as yellow squares against a stunning blue and black sky. If the sky really did look like this, I wouldn't complain.

"Shane Tolbert: Talk of Montauk" at Bill's Junk, 1125 E. 11th Street, now through December 22, Saturdays between noon and 5 pm or by appointment. For more information, call 713 863-7112 or visit www.billdavenport.com/opticalproject/opticalproject.html.

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