

Nicola Parente - Edge of Awakening

THROUGH THURSDAY, MARCH 24

"Only that day dawns to which we are awake." These words by Henry David Thoreau inspire Nicola Parente's new body of work Edge of Awakening. The dynamic series of expressive abstract paintings explores neither awakening nor its opposite, but the uncertain worlds between the two where each person must choose among possibilities. Those choices, those points of decision, visited and re-visited, both discover and invent the nature of our lives. In the paintings comprising the series, Parente embraces negative space to evoke a sense of limitlessness. On a predominantly white ground, lines of black and intermittent color appear and re-appear in ever-changing intervals and variant shades whose only clear boundary is the edge of the medium. According to Parente, "Art is a venture into worlds that are often only discovered in the attempt to represent them to yourself and others." He prefers to paint in series, "exploring multiple ways of saying not the same thing, but similar things, related things--things that are in process and could go in a multiplicity of directions. The possibility of awakening is also the possibility of remaining unawakened. Our lives are more circuitous than linear, living in more than one environment, a step forward, a step back, moving through a land with no clear boundaries whose silence we interrupt with both our words as well as our marks of paint, discovering and inventing our futures." Parente works from his studio in Houston, Texas. Born in Italy, he draws from a rich Italian heritage and a deep well of cross-cultural experiences to bring his art to life. Most recently, Parente's work was selected for Texas Art 2010 juried exhibition. In 2009, his work was featured in an exhibition, Transparent/Translucent, at the Museum Gallery, University of Texas, in San Antonio.