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Relay Points: One

July 26–Aug. 27 2011

With art practice today often resembling an arcane, alchemical mixture of science and sociology, the old idea of transcendence through creative inspiration has become taboo; we moderns generally prefer the comforts of detached irony to the dangers of exaltation. The self-taught artist, Bryson Bost, however, sees himself as a conduit for spiritual power, and his abstract drawings are meant to invoke and evoke eternal verities, if the Biblical titles ("Station Three; Jesus Falls the First Time," "Day 39 in the Desert," etc.) are accurate guides. Whether secular art consumers "get it" or not (critic Robert Hughes pontificated a few years ago that Barnett Newman was no Michelangelo), the works -- kitelike forms reminiscent of Kandinsky and Miro soaring above fields of labyrinthine Keith Haring hatchings -- succeed handily as vehicles of lyrical, maybe even psychedelic, transport. Relay Points: One runs through Aug. 27 at Vessel Gallery(471 25th St., Oakland). 510-893-8800 or Vessel-Gallery.com

— DeWitt Cheng

Vessel Gallery
471 25th St.

Oakland-Downtown

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