

Matthew Ballou

A Statement for *An Ensign For Miyoko Ito Series Works*

In my recent body of work, titled *An Ensign for Miyoko Ito*, I seek out the *compacted* and the *overdrawn*; the *enclosed* and the *layered*; the *transformed* and the *solidified*. I look for shapes, colors, and spaces that go far *beyond a simple tension between figuration and abstraction*, trying instead to *suggest a layered arena of observational and haptic information*.

Miyoko Ito (Japanese-American, 1918-1983) – whose work has been a key influence on me over the last 20 years – was able to activate *subtle surfaces with the illusion of space and an evocative sense of palpability*. This is what I'm investigating: the experience of perception *apart* from particular, representational depiction. In my exploration, questions arise: Does flat form appear to move away from my angle of view? Will color resolve into both static surface *and* suggested movement? Can space and color align to reinforce both static structure *and* an expression of time? Might the poetics of silent, unmoving images actually produce phenomena akin to those found in dreams, memories, ecstatic sensations, and atemporal musings?

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