

The New Criterion

Vol. 39, No. 3 / November 2020

Dispatch October 27, 2020 11:00 AM

The Critic's Notebook

by The Editors

On Brahms, cricket, paintings by Eric Aho, sculptures at The Clark & more.



Eric Aho, Path in the Mountains, 2019, Oil on linen. DC Moore Gallery, New York.

Art:



Installation view, "Eric Aho: Source." DC Moore Gallery, New York.

"Eric Aho: Source" at DC Moore Gallery (through November 7): A few weeks ago I noted an exhibition that put Frederick Church's sweeping nineteenth-century depictions of the sublime landscape into conversation with Mark Rothko's inward-facing abstractions, the best of which evoke sublimity through the non-representational language of pure painting. One contemporary artist who merges both of these impulses in his hunt for painterly transcendence is Eric Aho, whose seventh solo exhibition at DC Moore is now on view in Chelsea. Based in a small town in southern Vermont, Aho carries the unruly northern woods into his studio, incorporating recollections of disjointed natural phenomena into the precarious harmony of an abstract whole. The paintings, the largest of which measure ninety by eighty inches, present first as vertiginous walls of cascading pigment, but into these Aho punches deep pockets of distant space that open paths for the eye and mind to wander. A must-see for those wondering how romanticist ideas about both nature and painting remain fertile ground for the twenty-first century artist. —AS