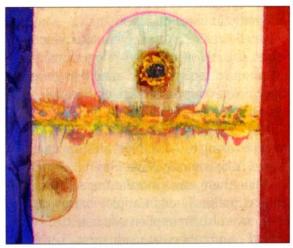


Frank Bowling

Spanierman Modern

A psychedelic waterfall cascades down Frank Bowling's canvas Simon & Mathew (1975). The lavenders and pinks of Around Midnight Last Night (1982) shimmer like oil slicks. In Alighting (2010), strips of red and blue bookend a creamy canvas that's divided by a yellow line and two pale circles. Sampling work produced between 1974 and 2010, this engaging show demonstrated Bowling's ongoing commitment to abstract formalism.

Born in Guyana and trained at Britain's Royal College of Art, Bowling began as a figurative painter, but by the early '70s, encouraged by Clement Greenberg, he abandoned figuration in favor of pure



Frank Bowling, *Alighting*, 2010, mixed media on canvas, 25" x 30". Spanierman Modern.

color, texture, and form, a direction he still pursues. Four years ago, he became the first black artist elected to the Royal Academy in London.

In Corinna's Adam (1974), a smeary swath of burnt orange flares into magenta. His 13th Hour (1976) showcases yellow, green, and red drips spilling down a mauve ground. By the '80s, Bowling's pours and drips gave way to splotches, marbling, and junkyard conglomerations. The swirling lilac hues in Odysseus's Footfalls (1982) evoke cosmic explosions, while the mold-green puddles harboring chunks of foam and egg carton in Cybele's Yellow Door to Fishes (1983) embody decay as much as they express it.

In *Alighting* and other recent works, Bowling flirts with a primary palette and gridlike geometry, almost coming full circle to early modernism. This show was a fitting retrospective for an artist who, slowly but surely, is getting his due.

-Mona Molarsky