



Ochi Gallery presents works by **Gregory Amenoff** and **Charles Arnoldi**. Opening reception March 14, 2009 from 6-8 p.m

An artist's artist is understood to be good at what he does, respected and admired by his peers, genuinely passionate about his work, in short, an artist who literally could not have done anything else with his life. To describe Charles Arnoldi or Gregory Amenoff as "artist's artists," is so entirely accurate that in doing so they cease to be examples and instead become standards.

In the studio everyday, Arnoldi has been making art for over forty years. His laid-back California stride, and soft, good-humored chuckle are reflected in the charismatic grace of his work. Amenoff, chair of the art department at Columbia University, is (taking nothing away from his work) equally as devoted to painting as teaching, and it would be difficult to find a student who couldn't say kind things about him.

Their commitment to art explains why, to view Charles Arnoldi and Gregory Amenoff's paintings is to steal a glance of another world where art, color and beauty surmount lingering "real-world" problems as they appeal to an audience's desire for inspiring perspective. Hardly mere decoration, their work is not without substance as both artists couple idea with candid inquisitiveness about medium and form.

Gregory Amenoff's paintings both pacify and excite with their languid, muscular shapes and concentrated color. Transforming hard white canvas or blank plywood board he creates dreamlike, almost mystical scenes by combining wistful palate with painterly gesture. The images are persuasive in their intimation of another time and place, which is why Amenoff has been compared to early twentieth century American Regionalists. And yet his paintings' hazy focus dismisses the suggestion that they depict actual place, invoking the mysterious to create an illusory effect.

In a similar way, Arnoldi also manages to bridge this world with another using his grand and graceful arcs that sweep across segments of the canvas. At once these arcs link section to section and even painting to painting while at the same time they fragment and disorient only to reemerge as pattern. And the color Arnoldi achieves, even when working only with black and white, radiates as if lit from behind, granting it a vibrant life of its own. All this illusion becomes more than visual play however when paintings are entitled *Barak*, *Hilary*, or perhaps most fitting for this body of work, *Mind Field*. One begins to wonder what kind of statement is encoded within Arnoldi's stunning abstractions.

Arnoldi and Amenoff succeed in creating worlds that can only be found in art. Harnessing and focusing their respective visions, each achieves a degree of elegance embodying all at once visual delight, artistic intrigue and occasionally hints of a more perfect world.