

> amsterdam > berlin > chicago > london > los angeles > new york > paris > **san francisco** > santa fe > worldwide



the #1 contemporary art network

SIGN IN  
HELP

PATRICK PAINTER INC  
SERVING LOS ANGELES SINCE 1997

HOME CALENDAR GALLERIES ART ARTISTS COMMUNITY ADD CONTENT

**In Black and White**

by Kristi Beardshear

**All We Ever Wanted Was Anything**

Eleanor Harwood Gallery

1295 Alabama Street, San Francisco, CA 94110

March 14, 2009 - April 18, 2009



James Chronister's uses a fascinating technique that gives the paintings in *All We Ever Wanted Was Anything* a unique depth. Having done a little pre-hop research, I was clued into the intricate levels of his work. Chronister begins by painting a canvas black and adds dots of white paint, dab by dab, until an image emerges. Viewing the work in person I was shocked to learn just how elaborate and how large his pieces are.

The simplicity of the technique's concept belies the complexity of the process. As I studied the paintings, alternately leaning in and stepping back, I imagined a man, bent over in his studio, slowly adding dot after dot, layer after meticulous layer. Viewed closely they look like, well, exactly what they are—thousands of tiny white dots against a sea of black. Remaining grounded in such a disorienting landscape takes inimitable vision and a heck of a lot of stamina.

SEARCH THE SF SITE

QUICK LINKS

- > galleries > museums
- > calendar > reviews
- > profiles > venues
- > add your profile
- > add your exhibit

ACTIONS

- + add to mylist
- ✉ email
- 🖨 print
- 💬 add a comment
- 🖱 add to del.icio.us
- 👤 digg this
- 🌐 stumble it!



The paintings, most left untitled, are astounding. Chronister focuses primarily on landscapes in which the natural contrast between light and shadow, white and black plays a dominant role. In *Untitled (Snowy Forest)* and *Untitled (Large Snowy Forest)*, the stark whiteness of the snow that blankets each trunk, branch, and twig throws the black mass of forest into sharp relief the way a camera flash illuminates a darkened scene. And like a flash that quickly fades into darkness, Chronister's landscapes are ephemeral, quickly losing form and cohesion as the viewer leans in for a closer look.



*Untitled (Dark Forest)* is especially striking in its volatility. The form of the landscape, a dense, sun-dappled forest, is clear only when viewed from across the room. Walk closer and forms begin to scramble and separate, the landscape becomes only a suggestion of one. Walk even closer and the scene becomes a tangled web of black and white, like an extremely complex Rorschach test.

--Kristi Beardshear

*Untitled (Snowy Forest)*, 2009 oil on canvas, 40 x 40

*Untitled (Large Snowy Forest)*, 2009, oil on canvas, 66 x 66

*Untitled (Dark Forest)*, 2008, oil on canvas, 57 x 57

All images courtesy of Eleanor Harwood Gallery and the artist

Posted by [Kristi Beardshear](#) on 3/28 | tags: [abstract landscape painting conceptual](#)

> **COMMENTS (0)** [\[add a new comment\]](#)

[CONTACT](#) [ABOUT](#) [ADVERTISE](#) [TERMS](#) [JOIN THE TEAM](#)