



Eva Lundsager, *Spoil* (detail), 1996.

**Eva Lundsager**  
Jack Tilton Gallery, through Sat 8  
(see Soho)

First impressions don't count for much when encountering Eva Lundsager's perverse abstract paintings. Glancing in from the street, one gets the impression of late-model Expressionism, all wet 'n' wild. Impatient viewers may walk out wondering what this work is doing in a cutting-edge gallery like Tilton. But a closer look will reveal enough oddities and contradictions to draw visitors into Lundsager's web of hyperpainterly intrigue.

There are seemingly impossible passages of bravura painting here: drips going the "wrong" way, rendered in colors that don't occur anywhere else in the composition. Puddling spills are stretched and pulled into spiraling tendrils of paint; daubs are used as building blocks to erect gorgeous, golden spires.

Lundsager has also enlarged her scale: In her first shows, her canvases

came closer to the jewellike beauty of Indian miniature painting. Now, instead of being six-inches square, they are a hearty and satisfying six feet in either dimension. At this scale, landscape references are hard to ignore, but it's equally difficult to name this or that brushstroke as horizon line or sky. And a few, like the delightful *Perch*, remind me less of a pastoral glade than a tempting dessert.

Since the current state of discourse on abstract painting is often one of association with earlier figures in this specialized field, descriptions sometimes come out sounding like recipes. Still, it's tempting to offer one here: Lundsager mixes Per Kirkeby's geological references with Howard Hodgkin's palate and seasons the lot with a bracing touch of Gerhard Richter's cerebral remove. But none of that is really necessary to savor Lundsager's engrossing combination of visual pleasure and intellectual stimulation.—*Bill Arning*