

**ERIK BENSON / AUGUSTO ARBIZO** One might venture to identify an emerging phenomenon among young painters, in which old-fashioned color-field abstraction merges with a dystopic, Pop-ish interest in the junky emptiness of highway on-ramps, strip malls, and corporate office parks. The idea stands or falls on the depth of engagement with the painted surface, and Benson is a good example of its success. His layered acrylic canvases start with splotches of paint laid onto glass; these are peeled up and collaged into works with a jigsawlike density, a gloomy/garish palette, and a keen sense of line. The compositions manage to express humor, loathing, and curiosity all at once. In the small gallery, Arbizo shows hot-palleted, Rorschach-style paintings. Through Oct. 14. (Roebbling Hall, 606 W. 26th St. 212-929-8180.)