

# Paintings That Shouldn't Work

## Elisabeth Condon at Lesley Heller Workspace

By FRANKLIN EINSBRUCH | August 4, 2011

Imagine if you could speak several languages, switching from one to another to suit your thoughts, inside of a single sentence. You might begin in English for the sake of clarity, then change to Chinese for an apt metaphor, then over to French for color and texture, then to Italian for a bit of structure. Elisabeth Condon can do this, in paint.

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*Courtesy of Lesley Heller  
Workspace*

Elisabeth Condon, *Sky Tree  
River*, 2010, 110 x 65 inches,  
acrylic and oil on linen

*Hello, Yellow* (2010), a four-foot-wide canvas built around pourings of lemon, gold, and umber, evokes the history of stained abstraction, Frankenthaler and Louis especially. But certain passages look tie-dyed. They upset the reference and move it into psychedelic territory. Upon them she has painted a stack of gray shapes, outlined in darker gray, through which a white ribbon runs. It is as if she took mountains from a Giotto, paved them, and divided them with a cubist roadway, going nowhere except into itself. The scene is dotted with precise squiggles. Neil Welliver might have doodled such shapes as he recalled a long day spent tracing.

Read the whole article at [Artercritical](#).

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