

The New Criterion *May 2010*

Gallery chronicle

by James Panero

For the past several years, Alexandre Gallery has been regularly showing Lois Dodd's gem-like scenes of Maine, often oil on masonite measuring at most two feet square. This past month, Alexandre brought together a selection of Dodd's older work matched with two recent cityscapes of the same scene painting over forty-years on.<sup>4</sup>

When Dodd first painted the city view from her studio window in the 1960s, she brought a hard-edged sensibility for structure and line to the urban scene. The highlight of this period on view at Alexandre was *Men's Shelter, April* (1968). In this large oil on canvas, an ordinary back window opens to a geometry of rooflines, colors, and shadows, which come together like an abstract jigsaw puzzle. Planes of color edge up against each other and seem to pulsate from their edges.

Over several images, Dodd depicted the same scene at different times of day and different seasons. In another series from the same period, she captured the garden view from her apartment in April, October, and a foggy day in February.

When Dodd returned to this same "Second Street" view from her window many years later, she brought her growing lyrical sensibility. In the two works from 2009, hard edges gives way to color and fullness, as though the urban landscape has entered full bloom.

<sup>4</sup> "Lois Dodd: Second Street Paintings" was on view at Alexandre Gallery, New York, from March 31 through May 1, 2010.