



Taylor, 2011, oil on panel, 50 x 60 inches.

Black usually recedes. Typically it's what moves away from the subject. It's a cast shadow that fades into the background or it's something else-or nothing-that sets up the "thing" in the painting that's lighter. To make a black object the subject of a painting is a formidable task for a figurative painter. First of all, the artist has to make what naturally falls away come forward. Secondly, it's very difficult to realize a black object volumetrically. Most painters rely upon a range from light to dark to model a form. A dark or black object provides no such luxury since the form needs to turn within a very limited range of value. It's astonishing then that Rubens can paint a black dress



School, 2011, oil on panel, 54 x 60 inches.

that should-by its lack of color-fade into the distance but instead dominates the foreground. Not only that, but he can make that same dress immensely solid and spatial within a very limited range of value. Why do I find that so thrilling? Maybe because I have found it to be so difficult to do. Maybe also because a black or dark object represents so much of what painting is about for me anyway: a statement and a question at the same time, like: "How can this painting be so present as a flat surface and so spatial at the same time? How can this black thing be both a void and a solid at the same time? It looks so real! It does look real...doesn't it?" - John Gibson 2011

JOHN GIBSON | BLACK

September 8 - October 7, 2011

Opening reception with the artist:
Thursday, September 8th, from 6-8pm

For more information contact Lily Downing Burke,
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Front Right: *Race*, 2011, oil on panel, 60 x 60 inches.
Front Center: *Beacon*, 2011, watercolor on paper, 44 x 43 inches.
Front Left: *Howard*, 2011, oil on panel, 60 x 60 inches.
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