

If your eyes are even marginally unsealed, you've come to recognize Centristism as a black hole. Centrists will fully fail to connect decades of pillaging the bottom ninety percent with a rise in resentment. Centristism has drifted into mask-off genocide, Cheney deference, and collateral-tossing. Centristism knows not a whiff of how to shield us from the 'get yours' pyramid scheme mentality of mediocre brologarchs. Centristism is 'maybe Mars is a good idea' paired with 'maybe the left shouldn't be so visible'. Gleeful MAGA mediocrity stands for 'more' than glum Centrist mediocrity. On balance, the horrors of bent knee Libs, tedious Ezra Klein's, the telling omissions of the NYT, PMC fragility, etc. etc. are piling up...

But I'm here to talk about Art, and it seems that art has to fall somewhere between the following two poles, or it would cease to be recognized, at least by most, as art. It would be political action (1) or wine (2).

Lumpen artists create works of genuinely blinding truth, transforming (in sequence) vulgar culture-vultures, trend-bucking curators and clout chasing collectors into dedicated and principled class-traitors. Generations of artists further sublimate noise into blinding truth. Institutions, inclusive of mass media, are simultaneously democratized. The straggling bourgeoisie is shamed into following suit, and voluntarily surrender their ill-gotten gains to the public good. Flush museums become a centralized engine of HBT (high blinding truth), and Art is triumphant as the jet fuel to all things humanist, and not-so-gentle laxative to property rights. Corporate David makes Charlotte Posenenske's sculptures open source once again. Selectively educated artists seal themselves off into a temperature controlled chamber of colors, aromas, tastes, textures, balance and complexities (wine points). Obscurantist ingredients combine pleasantly to naturally appeal to those whose pocketbooks indicate great depth. The institutions, whose depth is measured by a quantitative trust in the benefactors' depth, focus Power into Art that offers the least amount of friction to the kinks of the ruling class, usually a denuded, deluded purity. Kenneth Noland's bubble boy acrylics gather dust in museum storage no longer.

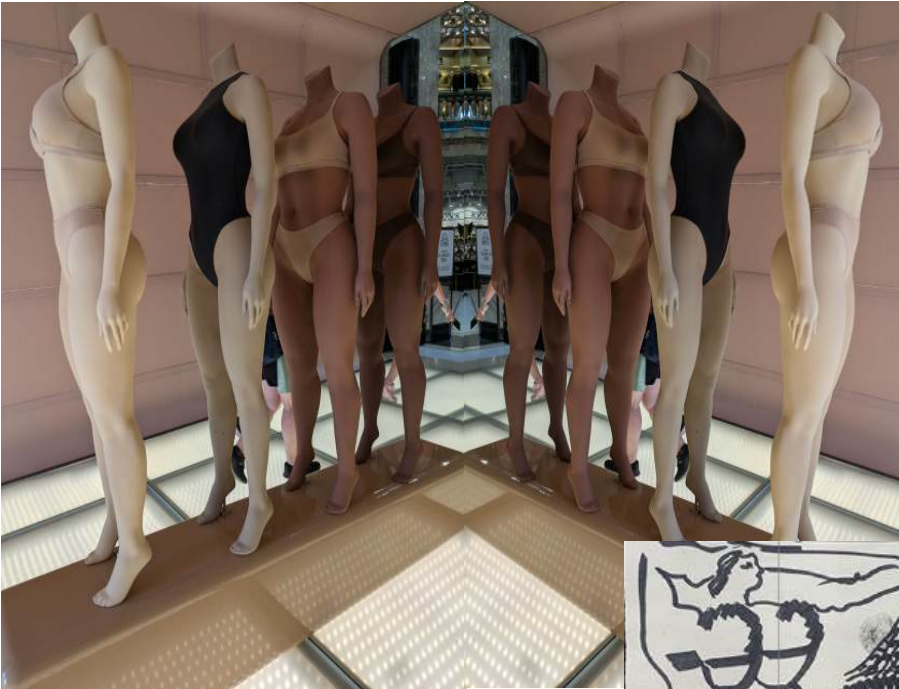


Morning Joe, 2024, destroyed

Between poles (1) and (2) are formalist artists making high-quality, perceptual, pointless art, for benefactors, and socially aware artists making ad-hoc, perceptive, futile art for themselves. The odd artist miraculously transcends their own personal and cultural narcissism and takes some swings at power structures, but no one in several hundred years has gotten as close to building images of resistance that David, Courbet or Goya could. Why is our scaffolding so conducive to show-off, novelty culture, and so dissociative to the humanist movement? Perhaps on the individual level, the meditative time required to produce strong art has been stripped bare...OR perhaps because mega-art is propped up by bachelors whose offshore accounts shouldn't exist...OR perhaps because capitalist pressures out-innovate arts ability to communicate and gobble attention.

But to not knowingly not seek limits, and my two poles are meant to be inadequate, in some metaphorical way, is to be crushed. Social media, movies, TV and pods may have won the markets for visual dominance and filtered connectivity, but I contend great art is something that lives beside these pressures and energized by its own obscurity. Art can still produce something alive, substantive, generative, and it does so in a unique way- awkwardly standing and swaying while looking, thinking, remembering. The capacity to synthesize an intense, earnest, relentless engagement with pigments and mud with an intense, earnest, relentless engagement with meaning is still integral to its structure, even if less accessible. In the last half of the twentieth century wine logic and 'theories of change' were pitted against each other- attempts to cancel each other out? We are finally more aware than ever that that is again a casualty of neoliberal logic, punch across and never up! We also know that the red/ brown political alliance isn't going to turn out well for the left, but (and here we get to the barfy acceptance of arts somewhat-centrist fate) is it so impossible that a critical/ formalist contemporary art can't be generative? Can't we hold our art up to a high formal standard and also understand progressive politics? Or is the mixture of red and brown an inevitable stomach acid green?





Passersby, 2025

The mannequin as decoy

Storefronts are late-stage assaults. Shoppers get stuck (as good painting does) in sticky campaigns hysterically lasso-cut-and-pasting eroticized physiques, black lives ASMR, Ralph Lauren erectile dysfunction, jetski colonialism, Alo SSR1 hoarding, Angela Davis tea cozies, etc.... repackaging them for additional profit (as bad painting does). What to do?

Maladaptive at the mall

Picturing an observer being manipulated, one layer before your eyes, is my way of stepping one layer further back into a normie space. I try to regain my innocence by reworking each layer until the composition achieves something solid, contemplative, detached, corruptible. My paintings do not photograph accurately at all. I have seen to it that their detachment can only be understood in person by moving around and seeing the shadows.

Escalators

Drawings fast and slow sit in sketchbook pages placed on my book shelf. I pull them down and put them back, wondering if a larger painting is in there somewhere. Something surprising has to both occur and be made to occur. I guess a large swatch of colored paper up on the wall. I guess a drawing onto the colored paper. I guess a painted wood frame to mount the drawing on. Then I become discerning, there are less guesses. A thin screen-like transparent layer of organza or mesh is cut, sewn, stretched around a thin plexiglas frame. The final layer, hovering over a drawing by about half an inch either comes together into something, or doesn't, and is destroyed.

Refund

Sophisticated and fickle, we shoppers switch fluidly between quick rough-shod reads and slow deliberative analysis. Quite like the act of looking at art in a gallery: standing, swaying, judging, scanning, passing. Dismissive absorption, intense speculation, desire, dread. To these ends, I notice the seams of my constructions have become focal points. These are the cracks and fault lines along which alternating painterly and mechanical gestures butt up and pile over each other, narrativizing our dissolving attention, seduction, acquisition, or healthy passing-by.





Does Frenhofer's masterpiece, and its detached, unrooted, self-feasting posture mark a hezy preface of modern 'Suprematism', or the sharp-epilogue of content-porary 'Surpassism'? (Useful biological sidenote: snakes have venom sacs larger than the brain and placed just behind the eye.)

pa
wasn't unorigina

In the end, as they say, what do we actually see in this folioled masterpiece of recreation? Can we imagine anymore what this 'incredible, slow, progressive destruction' of human form would look like given its common recurrence in all this 'art' each other as humans maybe, and more easily than we can see other humans in all this 'art'.

Says the dehumanized lamb in her most humanely endowed cry for integration: "I admire thee, but thou hast filled me with horror, I love you and yet already I hate thee." The brief turmoil is not so brief either, and this is a front of our eyes.

... or stiffer... a tangle of a

"Nothing." The pictorial directionlessness of the unknown masterpiece (cuddler?) wasn't unorigina...
The resulting nonsense is borne out of a surplus of
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He asks his mentor for guidance, for his eyes on the subject: "Can you see anything?" The response: "Nothing." The pictorial directionlessness of the unknown masterpiece (cuddler?) wasn't unorigina...
The resulting nonsense is borne out of a surplus of
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Scores of Frenhofer's have been swallowed up whole with their work, some Bazar's time. The frenzy makes the...
Frenzies find the single text to be similarly foolishly given the frequency with which we witness Frenhofer's...
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A lagging fragment that like the torso of some Greek Venus, brought to light and the lines of a draped city...
to sick and shiny precarious pointlessness. The pointy appendage points out not just how damn hard it can be to willy a...
to sick and shiny precarious pointlessness. The pointy appendage points out not just how damn hard it can be to willy a...

Unknown Masterpieces Snake, 2024
Sithering in stage left is fake-Poussin, a whiz on the make who sacrifices his girlfriend (brief turmoil) for a momentary glimpse of a painting (promised masterpiece) by Old Frenhofer. The glimpse, it turns out, was a costly gambit, and in exchange for his lamb fake-Poussin gets only... unintelligible mass... a worked-into-a-trail of... mostly nothing.

William Morris Tank, 2023

An earnest peace tank painting in 14 parts.



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SHE
WALKED
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OCTOBER
27TH
2023
!!!!!!

The Two Thomas More's', 2020

Thomas More's thin-volumed-monument *Utopia* (1520) ends with such a sudden sense of deflation as to raise suspicion.

Utopia: To our delight we learn (second-hand) that a society already exists that has eliminated competition, scarcity, crime, property, money, and most of the accompanying hardships of an exploitation based economy. Utopians also wield self-critical golden toilets five hundred years before the Guggenheim.

More goes to check the boxes that good dramatic characters generally undergo: inner struggle, outward reckoning, moral awakening. Then, in a sudden paragraph comes the amputation. Future-thinking erodes as questions abound. Would egalitarianism actually work? More's character succumbs: what about electability?

Explanations for the u-turn are left open by More: nihilism, passivity, satire, conservatism all jostle as possibilities. By stopping just short of pointing a finger towards any of these, More spotlights the mechanics of the disengagement process, but more importantly he leaves the process feeling *unfinished*. We are left with a blank, our sense of completion itself is placed on a teeter totter. Similar non-conclusions are abundant in Utopic Socialist fiction from Swift's *Gullivers Travels*, to Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, to Morris' *News From Nowhere*. The imagination is snapped in half, amputated, turned on itself, sure, but it is also willfully, intelligently unresolved.



End Collection, 2019

"If Hogarth's sordid pictorial chronicles often show a tough-minded critique of society, it is also true that he rarely uses art to depict the values in which he believed. He pointed out the flaws in society but profited from his didacticism; by holding up a distorting mirror to society he earned his fortune." Albert Boime, *Art in the Age of Revolution 1750-1800*.

Title ideas: "Big themes in art in big homes with big walls!" "Deep Art for deep pockets!" "People who are quiet are taken more seriously, and painting has the advantage of being mute!"

Some questions for figurative art: Are the figures engaged in weighty actions? By our association (we looked!) do we ever feel an equivalent moral weight as viewers of art? Can painting ever again persuade us that we are participants? Can the depiction of a figurative reckoning ever be as substantial as our present reckoning? Or are these lofty questions something our now-dissolved art can't provide?! "What do you provide?!" the art yells back ala Reinhardt. A loop is created in which aspiration out-jogs achievement.

I get stuck in the world dividing line and tone, so I search for images on the internet. The picture is shopped out and then built. Shop, build. In that order. If anything emotional starts coming out in the narrative as I go... like something suggestive where I don't expect it.... then..... buzz in the investors!





ALL CAPS, ALL THE TIME 2018

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO DEPICT ANYTHING WITH SUBTLETY OR TENDERNESS. SWEETNESS MUST NEVER COME THIS WAY.
WE DON'T LIKE YOUR TYPE DOWN HERE, YOU HEAR?

LEVEL-HEADED CRITICISM IS WHINING! YOU ARE ONLY PERMITTED TO COMPLAIN ABOUT COMPLAINING! GREIV-
ANCE GOOD, WHINING BAD, GOT IT? GOOD, BECAUSE LOSING IS SUBLIMATED INTO AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY TO
RESTRUCTURE !! LOSS MUST NOT BE DWELT UPON WITHOUT CONCEDED TO THE TEAM OF "THOSE WHO DO NOT WIN".
ARTISTS TAKE NOTICE: AMBIGUITY IS A GOOD WAY TO AVOID FUTURE MELTDOWNS. THERE MUST NEVER BE 'ENDINGS'
IN A PAINTING.

"TO SUM UP: AESTHETIC EFFECT IS NONE OTHER THAN THE PLEASURE FELT BY THE OBSERVER WHEN HE RECOGNIZ-
ES HIMSELF IN A PICTURE'S VISUAL IDEOLOGY." NICOS HADJINICOLAOU (!!!)

For Ukiyo-e master Harunobu Suzuki line is precise and hair-thin, structurally sound and vibratory. Eyes bounce around the semi- enclosed room with ease the, and out through the punctured windows. Activities, private and public, are simply layed out for us to see with clarity. We accumulate the aesthetic experience by wandering, precisely, quietly, saturated, through the picture. We are given hallways, bridges, windows and doors for our eyes to travel. I can only describe, redundantly, because the state I am actually in while looking is the closest to meditative I can get without much personal toil. The scale, being book-sized or maybe slightly bigger, reinforces the idea that when we are done looking, looking, we could just as easily walk away with this page of society, distilled, generous, folded up, in our pocket.



Admiration comes in the additive form of James Gillray. Tender, bitter struggles to build towards a multi-pronged climax: the blush of corruption, a swoon of imbecility, the swelling of foolish patriarchs. Nothing feels rushed, audience suspension is a loose goal.

I live with his print from 1788 The Morning After Marriage. I find that the inflating of both the principal figures (a big yawn foiled with a 'come hither' gesture) ignites my circumnavigation through the picture. Gillray leaves a trail of self-scathing clues to trip on, but it's the overall composition that reveals the thematic punchline of... impotence?! Gillray breathes fake stale air into his pictorial rooms. I say fake because his lines are too lively and fun to camouflage the irony.





Compositional Tourism, 2015

Masaccio unfolding:

Peter heals the sick! Healthcare for all? Peter seems so heavy that it took me a while to realize that his foot position implies forward motion. After looking longer I noticed that 'health' is depicted as being 'upright' in the figures that Peter has passed. 'Sickness' I slowly realized, is depicted as 'prostrate'. The sick figures are here positioned closer to the foreground, where we are situated as viewers.

When I look at most paintings, I am in my own head 'figuring out', whereas here I had the feeling that an unfolding was occurring somewhere in front of me, beyond my control.

Looking more: the internal rhythms, the tempo of the picture gains enough inertia for the block-like figures to churn into a slow shuffle. The sick figures in the present tense will soon be healthy figures reintegrating into the city life behind. Order is seen always being restored before our eyes.

Linda Nochlin in writing on Goya's Third of May notes a similar unfolding commentary. "For Goya, meaning unfolds, within the pictorial world, in time and space, progressing from the grey undifferentiated background of 'before' to the stark, light-revealed climax of the men being executed- 'now' - to the lumpish, blood-encrusted fallen figures at the very boundary of the pictorial world- 'afterwards'. This progression in time- emphasized by light, by intensification of colour saturation, and by the degree of materiality of the paint surface itself- is bound to an underlying moral conviction of the senselessness and bestiality of such events."

This being the early Renaissance however, Masaccio outlines and fills in. There is little 'motion' in his manipulation of material. This fresco compresses a highly planned image into a single layer of paint fused with limestone. My interpretation of the work likewise seems to merge with its undeniable matter-of-factness. Masaccio's miracle here is not so much his affect of artlessness, it's that he allows his supreme choreography to shine without adjustment.



Uccello jumble:

Uccello's jumbled, exquisite puzzle 'The Deluge' is unresolvable, exacting, and composed of confusing overlappings. The painting offers up several entrances to the viewer, directions to take, blockages to dwell upon- like a complicated traffic system, all set over a fractured ground plane. Boogie-Woogie structural precision set to the armature of a snowglobe.

I wonder: did it thrill or terrify Uccello to create a world where the ground plane is sinking and unstable? The chessboard tips, sinks, cracks, decays, while its players fight, sob, love, hate, struggle to stay aligned to the grid. And Nature too is breaking; lightning strikes the man-made vanishing point, accurately. Nothing is accidental. This is an apocalypse that unfolds slowly enough to fully comprehend what it looks like.

Piero strata:

I wonder if Piero della Francesca made preparatory cartoons for every individual figure, and later arranged and overlaid them, like life sized paper dolls across a stage set. More ostentatiously than Masaccio and even Uccello, Piero finds resonance in the resulting flattened patterns arising from his ultra-complex interlacing of limbs and landscapes.

Longhi writes on Piero that "perspective projection..bring[s] to the surface, for the benefit of the eye, a masonry of sumptuous coloristic equivalencies". The optical stretch of the cross, the effrontery of the victorious horse, the barricade of Corinthian columns, all surprise visually. We are fellow members of the crowd. The strange mathematically distorted (vector) shapes take perceptual adjustments in the viewer to become measured, accurate and rational looking objects. Check, check, and check.

The mind-grounding sequencing of themes: burial- re-growth- repurposing- rediscovery- re-burial- excavation- repurposing. Allegorical history is here 'proven' to us through hard-earned pictorial building. We have the gratifying position of being placed outside (and below) the frame to see as an archeologist (in a crowd, perhaps in the apron of a theatre) would. I am not exactly moved, but I am in awe.





Carravaggio selfie:

Caravaggio does away with all the labour wrapped up in *building* art (thank you lens) and gives legitimacy to future-future artists who tend to curate, organize and executive produce their work to keep up the seasonal rush of the artworld.

Caravaggio paintings are accepted readily, on immediate terms with those I've observed looking. It is very easy to see into, and even climb into a Caravaggio. Check the gangsters in the picture above, they could easily become part of the Caravaggio behind them, if their postures not so rigid and the light not so even. Veronese on the other hand, doesn't stand a chance to someone who looks while strolling. Veronese gives pleasure only to those who enjoy disentangling, at weed-wacking there way into a picture.

Caravaggio cuts away ruthlessly at thinking-in-paint, and the climax-obsessed results seem to objectively grab us. His works simply state that the manipulation of form (are you listening Rembrandt?) are tiring for the average viewer. A hard-line is drawn that continues through Warhol to today's top-selling mechanized wunderkinds.

In the Vatican Entombment painting we have a compositional accordion that moves us between a decrepit body and the extended outstretched arms of Mary Magdalene. The repeated motion is incessant, a mechanized repentance. Is there criticism here on the part of the artist about his source material, being done a million times already by 1602, or do I project?

Doorways, 2015

Robert Smithson disparages biomorphic kidney shapes, finding them to be the unimpressive result of the modern artist who was content to torture themselves repeatedly. Still believing in the revelatory power of the hand-made, I looked for a form that would constrict my maximalist tendency, so I chose a rectangular door shape.

I used to want my art to have a 'way in'. I assumed it was a more democratic approach, less elite, but then I more recently am realizing that a large number of people may in fact prefer to 'stay out'. The open/close situation gives a set duration to a pictorial experience, like an on/off light switch.

Closed doors are spaces we are not allowed to enter: management only. What's hiding in there?



Plastic Plead, 2014

Wrapping a layer of clear vinyl over compositions collaged from many materials results in a shiny, clear, uniformly flat surface to paint on. I try my most fluid matter-of-fact hand, with opaque oil paint. Once it is covered I don't go back to fix anything: the layer beneath the clear plastic already had these struggles resolved.

In the Veronese painting 'Allegory of Navigation With a Cross-Staff' we are shown an elegant figure looking beyond the upper left of the edge of the painting in which they are contained. Expansionist themes emerge from the posturing, aspirations for the ruling class. Veronese the drone operator from his safe studio?

In my painting 'Pleading Up' I placed a jumble of a head in the lower portion of the rectangle. The finger-eyes leer upward. Who dictates painting, and what are its aspirations? Somebody vaguely *up there*, and I don't mean a guy in sandals.





Oppositional, 2013

Reducing drama to a formula: you have one person who wants one thing, and another who wants something else.

Magnifying conflict is on some level the defining goal of a screenplay, debates make perfect television (spontaneity is achieved cheaply). Maybe this simple device can inject painting with new life? Trap the viewer in a perpetual apples vs oranges compositional device. Debates are more open-ended and opinions more fluid than they appear to have become. Riccocheting horizontal compositions.

While working on the painting Males and Mirrors I kept getting stuck with one or two figures. After some months, I realized that three figures were necessary to indicate a 'society', so I started again at a larger scale, and the joke emerged: something to do with evolution reduced to a long horizontal rectangle.

American Themed Tissue Box is a heavy/lightweight title. I set out to make a bravura painting of American exceptionalism with all of the compositional limitations and inwardness that a tissue box suggests. Sneeze, snort, sniff. Aesthetically I wasn't happy until I cropped out most of the negative space so the box fills the space aggressively.

Collage Dust, 2013

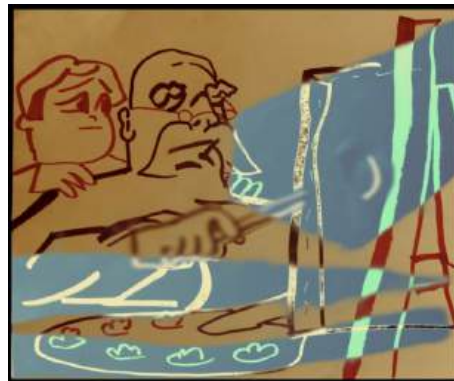
What is it that recent painting (contemporary seems too futuristic a word) intrinsically have that older paintings don't? Bigger scale? More general inclusivity? A preponderance of unorthodox material?

It feels to me like collage/assemblage is so accepted in paintings, that it hardly causes a rupture anymore. In fact, it feels less taxing to the average viewer (I would wildly venture to say) to wander through a piece of collaged pictorial space, than it is to fix a stare into perspectively orthodox space. The world itself- our malls, our cities at least, are collages, and the enticement is stimulating both to our senses and our wallets.

What to do now that it no longer seems meaningful to prolong the modernist obsession with reinventing ruptures within the pictorial surface? Or rather, what to do now that those ruptures are in effect flat to us?

I think painting is actively trying to participate in a vague hazy movement where these elements are treated with disinterest to the point of them becoming mere building blocks. Building blocks that we all pretty much can recognize. We are excited when we see familiar forms behaving in new ways. Like an old friend who has finally gotten over a bad relationship, and seems radiant and full of curious potential. We envy these people; just as I envy a painter who can make two old things go together with new results.

Does this alchemy seem too modest? Yes I suppose it has the air of gentle artisanal mastery written all over it. The sculptor slowly chipping away at something that will never catch up with his mutating surroundings. The dusty 'doctor' who must perfect all the exercises his taxing professors have set out for him before he can truly start to tackle the difficult questions of himself: what to contribute?! Slowly, so slowly the concerns seem to react or relate to our collective everyday lives. Is there something moving in this research, so at odds with a world in which everything moves away from the grasp (although we are told things are more tactile), or is it merely dusty, hopeless?





HD Aesthetic, 2012

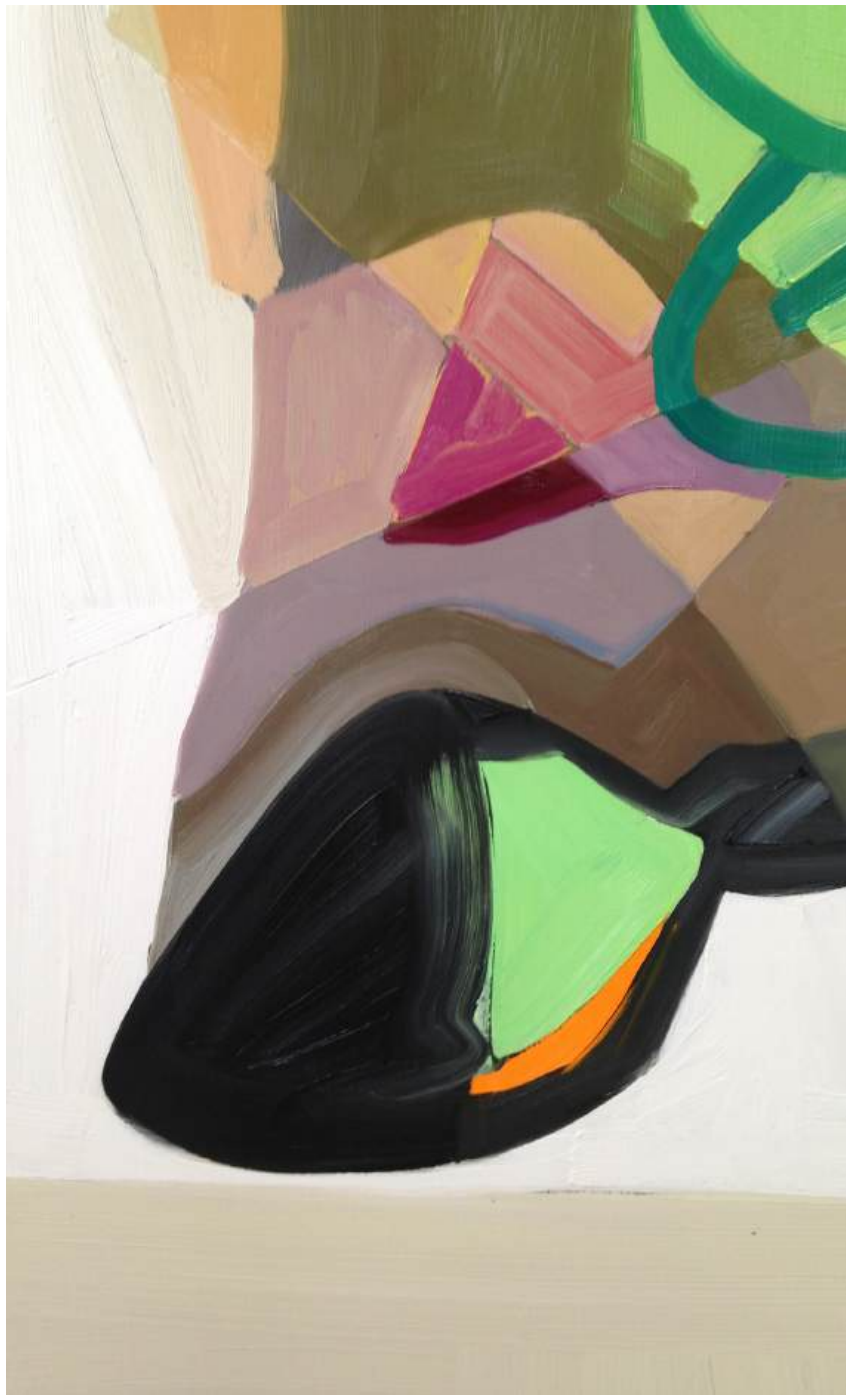
Billboard culture is an aesthetic of sharpness.

It has this sharp anti-depth of focus quality that unquestionably accelerates our heart beats: there are exactly 167 raindrops on the hood of that expensive car.

The image is knowable to the smallest shard of its mosaic, easily grabbed and maneuvered in pseudo-three dimensions with digital hunt-and-gather tools.

There is something exciting about this- about the arrangement of pixels on a screen is much more efficient (calorie-wise, not carbon-wise) than, say, the real-world building of sculptural objects.

Our world is losing its shadows; the extruded relief is being thinned.



Eye-balls, 2011

Eye-balls bathed in color: a given. LED screens the size of a city block gush color and turn our skin fluorescent blue: no big deal. As a result, it's nearly impossible to make color seem excessive. Screen color offers new intensities, and our eyes adjust quickly, making museum paintings seem even dimmer: too bad for you. Bad taste has been outrun; Ed Pashke becomes as earthy as Courbet. 'Keeping up' through color is embarrassingly important to me.

The history of looking at painting is what art consists of, not the material of paint scrubbed on fabric. Rather it consists in the arc taken by the human eyeball across the surface of a painting. Gliding and resting will be the reductive mechanics by which the art lives on (is reinterpreted) or dies in obscurity (is boring) .

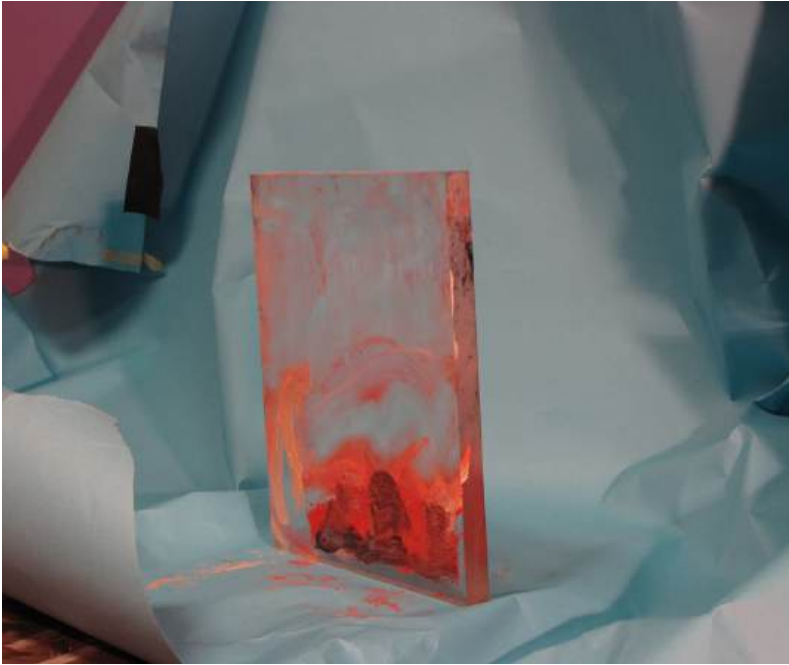
Try to speak clearly, 2011

If you cut a chair in half and weld to it a large shape, it is hard to tell if it is a chair or an abstraction involving something chair-like. The word 'chair' is suspended.

The welding of satire and abstraction. Satire, while satisfying when done well, is never very mysterious. Abstraction, (in the Kandinsky tradition and not in the Mondrian tradition) gives the viewer vague directions, like 'turn right at the bluest building'. Satire gives sharp directions, slapping us and telling us 'you are lost and very, very alone.'



But ah, painting is comfortable to look into. When we zone out, consciously or unconsciously, what does it look like? It doesn't look out of focus, nor does it look merely 'empty'. To concentrate on ones visual perception without any of the interference of thinking is perhaps a myth, but it becomes less still of a possibility with the internet in our hands at all times. I thought it would be interesting to somehow work this tug-of-war between perception and thinking into my work, maybe even in a narrative form, like a developer bath. But it is hard to be happy with a work-in-progress.



Hard to write down, 2010

When things mash into each other in a painting there is a suggestion that the hierarchy between figure and ground has been upset. When we move around IRL we don't melt in and out of the wallpaper as in a Vuillard painting. Nothing passes through our bodies, our skin is not permeable. Our field of vision however, can be made to unlearn this division between figure and ground. The picture plane is a place to show the process of perception, its workings, all that which is hard to write down.

And then what to use as an armature to hold of these more removed considerations? I do not provide the services of a good movie director, like ensuring a narrative through-line. Given the medium of painting, it can accrue until it suddenly or gradually points to a specific ending, the now-moment. So maybe the better question: what kind of subjects make sense trapping in the amber, and why? Endless narratives spring to mind: politics and soap operas. Keep on napping! (stop trucking!). Instead of getting caught up in such games, I am instead reminded that perception, unadulterated, is the best endless narrative in town.



Morley via Cezanne, 2010

The wall label of the Cezanne painting "View of the Domaine Saint-Joseph" late 1887 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art states that it is "one of the very few paintings he signed and thereby certified as 'finished.'" I think this painting is either a small miracle of perception-formation, or a happy accident.

The arrangement of painted marks are easily recognized (put-together might be a better phrase for looking at Cezanne) as tree, rock, sky, even though the white of the gessoed ground shows conspicuously through. With more looking I noticed in my periphery the distance between the paint strokes tightening together, eliminating the light tones of the primed canvas. This congealed space in my periphery became strikingly spatial and animated, nearing a hallucination. Forms began to bulge in those outer reaches of my vision. Thinking it was an optical aberration in my eyes, I shifted my gaze quickly to my periphery to examine and the 'bulges' flatten right out. Like a cat chasing a mouse, the painting says to my eyes 'look at me, I am only brush strokes, in the process of being put-together, across a totalizing field of brushstrokes'. Yet the edges of my attention were continuing to discover these exciting tactile, bulging and eerily convincing spaces.

I later tested the effect on a 2/3 scale reproduction in the gift store- to my surprise it worked, but only at about a third of the strength of the real life effect.

Jonathan Crary writes in his book *Suspensions of Perception*, Cezanne's late discovery was that "looking at one thing intently did not lead to a fuller and more inclusive grasp of its presence, its rich immediacy. Rather it led to its perceptual disintegration and loss, its breakdown as intelligible form,... attention... always of limited duration, inevitably decomposing into a distracted state or a state incapable of maintaining what had initially seemed like a grip on an object or constellation of objects". The disintegration in my experience, occurred precisely at the place I had my attention fixed while the rest of the painting went on show me great things. It was almost as if 'current time', had to be fixed so that 'future time' could exist in the region we cannot perceive, on the edges of our perception, quite literally here in the periphery. This I experienced as a quota of time, making clear the time-based element of painting.

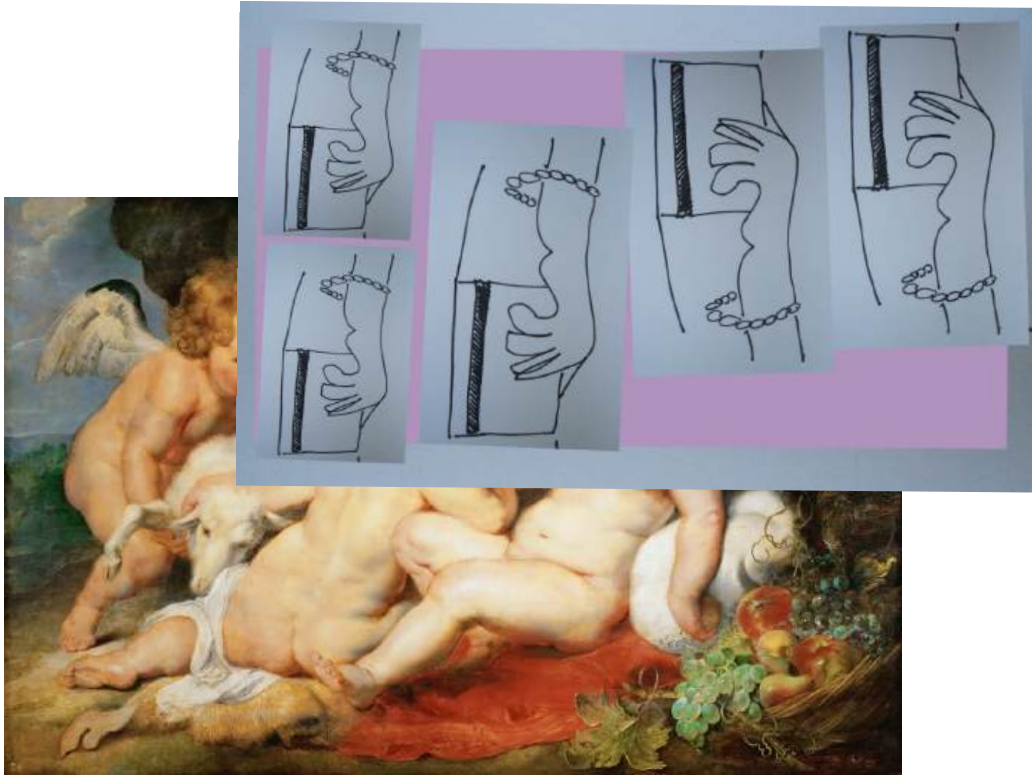
Crary convincingly states that Cezanne "discovers that perception can take no other form than the process of its own formation". Beyond mere illusionism, the overall effect was exciting: I felt my own agency, humble though the means, to discover my own process of formation. I was being asked to join the aesthetic experience.

British artist Malcolm Morley: "Cezanne said that he felt his eyes bleeding when he took them off one object to the next... You can imagine the idea of the eyes sucking, like a suction pad. I feel like that myself sometimes, that the eye sucks onto this and that it hurts to let go and move on to the next place".

Critic Klaus Kertess has noted, "like painting itself, the realm of tourism is one of highly organized pleasures. The organization meant to safeguard the pleasure very often puts that very pleasure under stress and threatens it with incompleteness". As a viewer joining in the aesthetic experience of a Malcolm Morley painting is more complicated than with Cezanne. Here we have perhaps zoomed out a little, and we as the viewer are positioned once again like the tableau pictures of the nineteenth century as one viewing history from the outside. But then the histories being shown- souvenir postcards, telephone book covers writ large- are again put through a mode of depiction that only Cezanne achieves. In a painting like 'Battle of Algiers' Morley's brushstrokes congeal and separate- stutter and reform. The perception-formation so crucial to the aesthetic impact in Cezanne is here re-issued in a new guise.

Morely gives a clue as to how this smaller miracle was achieved: "I've made friends with my resistance, it's no longer my enemy... I covered most of the canvas with brown paper and started in a new place. I only had a little white canvas left to look at and I was able then to proceed; I had lowered the resistance"





Babies, 2009

Metaphor of unconscious consumer. Baby Checkout. Baby looks good in a title.

I don't have kids, but I speculate providing little consumers what they want constitutes a large part of the pleasure of parenthood.

Babies are new. Babies and paint mix well.

Elegant and arrogant. Space and composition. Copy and paste. Babies and suburbs go together for me. Each requires an abundance of optimism, blind and bright. Hope is officially a subset of consumption.

Futurebaby: Distant shot of diaper-filled burning dumps. 'Keep Your Baby Off My Lawn' in extreme foreground.

Comments on the Techniques of the Masseuse, 2009

For starters: the anticipation of a hand touching my temple.

It touches me but feels pretty literal, for starters.

I want to seem bored so the masseuse knows to put a little more effort into it.

Some thought might help too.

Then again, this isn't so bad.

Some strokes are up to par others mediocre, I cry out with the topography of my face!

The act of being pleased by another in a complex transaction that always has these rectangular edges!

Relaxation, recorded, and made perpetual.

The service is evidenced in the face as profound relaxation. Quality rendering.

The inward effect is caused by an outside party.

Being manipulated into being absorbed is definitely what is relaxing about getting a massage, and it's definitely what is exciting about painting.

How quaint seems the artistic state of entering and spelunking the subconscious!

Sign me up, one month free with credit card approval.

The ability of the subject to go missing.

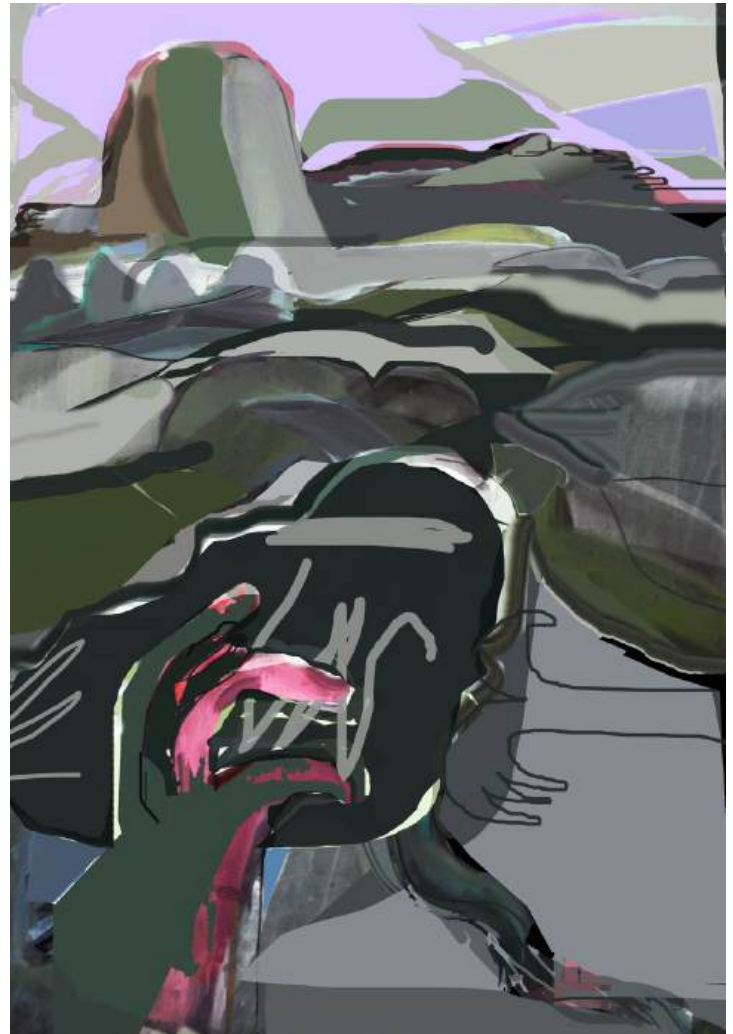
I'm practicing my best reaction, my edited reaction.

The dents are being puttied in and painted over.

That pain should have lasted longer to be truly healing. This cost too much.

And what of the lasting effect?

(I was touched nevertheless).



How-To Manneristic Style, 2007

Niceness, indifference, ongoing moderation, and calmness.

Expensive.

Piles of People as a Picture.

This squeezing Costco class. Everyday beauty/ lurking guilt. Paradise will hold itself together at all costs.

The project is to try to make paintings that cover the gamut of unspecific middle class emotion. Camouflage any vulnerability and react your way deep into the gated community.

What horror, romance, and crumbling glamour! My growing salon-style power-point presentation representing toe-nail clippings of decadence, dumb notions of romance, guesses at righteousness, are getting shrink-wrapped and made ready for purchase.

I want to make images of this culture in a How-To Manneristic style to mirror our hypnotically consumer driven daydreams, and namely the lifestyles we fall for, being so very comfortable, and comfort being so ahhhhh relaxing...zzzzz...





Moods and Criteria, 2003

"In desisting from interpretation, you do not cease to project. You merely project more unwittingly. For there is no escape from oneself and little safety in closing art history off against the contemporary imagination." Leo Steinberg, Objectivity and the Shrinking Self

Making paintings requires endurance. I have to walk back and forth a lot in my attempt to get the job done: I make visual decisions from up close and very distant to the surface of a canvas. I'm really trying to save myself effort this way: I'm trying to make every mark significant. It's hard and I'm desperate, but then it is easy, and things happen on their own. I see space and significance. I try to see my own painting as a consumer or as a critic; as a participant or as a cynic; as a romantic or as a hypocrite. It is embarrassing that it has been done so often, and why am I writing about it?

A painting doesn't grow on its own, it needs to be added to, 'put' here and there, again and again, and of course we change our moods and criteria as we go, so we must adjust to that as well... All these trains of thoughts get confusing! I have to return to the original thought, where did that go? Where did I think this would grow? I hope I wrote it down...

But I usually haven't, and distrust from my mis-use of words is entrenched. Drifting and diverse thoughts that one's mind inevitably encounters while working in a room for hours on end, can find their way into the forms of the picture, if noticed and enlarged. Does writing help?