

Statement

My painting practice engages the notion of uncertainty and constant re-evaluation: a vigilant, contingent subjectivity. Paintings themselves are impenetrable; Sartre described an “absolute distance” between viewer and painting. I continue to hope that by exploiting that distance, paintings can describe possibility.

The figures in my paintings have been described as provisional, multiple, dissolving. As a shadow is a two-dimensional figure dependent on a three-dimensional object, I use the painted figure as a phenomenological referent. The body is a democratizing influence in painting; the viewer identifies with the depicted body as he or she identifies with his or her own body in a mirror—skin, hands, muscle. This reflection allows a basic accessibility and seduction. These figures exist in a many-layered field of transparent paint itself: an environment in which the figures begin to congeal or diffuse. I paint transparently, in order that the implication of constant reevaluation becomes manifest. This field allows for the paint itself to become evidence of possibility, rather than a map, or “picture” of possibility.

I do not actively engage narrative, for I do not find it profitable to show only a point in an ongoing story, a snapshot. Avoiding overt narrative also allows a painting to be self-sustaining rather than as dependent on an external source. As paintings are fixed images, they are suited to suggest a “state.” Such a state may be explored independent of the need to decipher a narrative. Multiple readings, perspectives, and responses are all available in such exploration. Vigilant reinterpretation and rereading is as critical with my paintings as it is in a hyper-saturated world of images where it becomes easy to repeat, rather than reevaluate, what one sees or hears.

My paintings invite emotional or metaphorical interpretation, but the search for a single reading is frustrated by the ambiguous relationship between inchoate figures and an abstract mapping of a field: a non-space. This ambiguity within non-space hopefully suggests a metaphorically-based consciousness. I hope the paintings do not presume to proclaim or declaim but instead silently exist as entities unto themselves. I would like my paintings to act as speculative philosophical propositions, rather than polemic exercises. I continue to believe there is yet room in the human endeavor for painting to operate as more than commentary.

There may be hints of stories, memories, and searches in my work, but they stubbornly remain distant echoes. The autobiographical aspect of my paintings is one I do not discuss, as it is too personal to reveal, and ultimately irrelevant to the viewer. My paintings, like the figures that inhabit them, are half-metaphors, which I hope implicate a philosophical rather than narrative space. In the attempt to interpret in the absence—or absolute openness—of narrative possibility, the figures, like the paintings themselves, can be seen as buoys glimpsed through a mist.