

Syracuse University

SURFACE

Theses - ALL

May 2019

Digital Is Not Enough

Mark John Zbikowski Jr.
Syracuse University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://surface.syr.edu/thesis>

Recommended Citation

Zbikowski Jr., Mark John, "Digital Is Not Enough" (2019). *Theses - ALL*. 295.
<https://surface.syr.edu/thesis/295>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by SURFACE. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses - ALL by an authorized administrator of SURFACE. For more information, please contact surface@syr.edu.

Abstract

Throughout the course of this text I will be discussing the relationship my art practice shares with various modes of digital manipulation. Discussions of the “device” and how it is inevitably the source for manipulation of information and how these paintings are using this notion as a subject matter to create a conversation about illusions in contemporary digital culture. A thorough analysis of my artistic practice reveals how my process of making in the studio relates to these illusions and forms of digital image making. Painting methods have been appropriated by digital, in the form of virtual toolboxes and filters, and my works re-appropriate these digital painting methods and effects to create my own language and to suggest that digital manipulation is not enough.

Digital is Not Enough

How Paintings Have a More Experiential Presence

by

Mark J Zbikowski Jr

B.F.A. State University of New York Oswego

Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts in Studio Arts.

Syracuse University
May 2019

Copyright © Mark J Zbikowski Jr. 2019

All Rights Reserved

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1.
The Interface Illusion.....	2.
The Digital Experience vs. The Painting experience.....	3.
Online Slang Terminologies.....	5.
Swype it Out.....	8.
My Relationship with The Device.....	10.
How and Why They're Made.....	12.
The Reveal.....	23.
Conclusion.....	26.
Bibliography.....	28.
Vitae.....	30.

I. Introduction

My paintings reclaim what digital technology has taken from painting. Painting is one of the oldest traditions in art history, dating back to the first cave paintings in southern France around 30,000 years ago (Janson, D. Janson, & HW 1996). Digital technology on the other hand is very young but extremely adaptable and has the capability to take on any form. Digital manipulation in its short existence has taken various attributes of traditional painting methods and appropriated them in its own ways. It uses a similar language to painting but is profoundly different. I find myself questioning the power of the experience from a digital work — while its presence and seductive effects are ubiquitous — is it enough? Traditional painting methods have been appropriated by digital methods resulting in the form of virtual toolboxes and filters. My work aims to re-appropriate digital painting methods and effects to create my own language through traditional painting. I think of painting as a more effective way to perceptually describe the things that digital technology is trying to do but is failing. The reason for my paintings existence in the 21st century is primarily because they have an actual experiential presence —the scale of the work, bright colors, layering, and clear evidence of “the hand” in complex relation to familiar markers of the digital world, invites the viewer to view the digital from the physical world, to consider the digital rather than be consumed by it.

The everyday has been dramatically changing over the course of a couple decades due to the rise of available technology. The device and its infinite potential for absolute convenience continues to grow. The need to have all the information at the click of a button has created a physical attachment to the device. The device has become a personal sidekick or a way to

interact with the rest of the world, a removed experience from the actual space we occupy. Along that path some things may be true and some may not. Digital manipulation becomes a common term that encompasses manipulation of any digital media platform, including digital art, social media, or even this age of fake news. Through my experiences with these platforms, I have found that digital technology can create illusions that alter perceptions of our realities. My work sets the tone for a conversation about these experiences in relation to traditional painting.

II. The Interface Illusion

Digital culture creates an illusion of actuality that becomes the main source of altered states of awareness. My paintings display a repetitive theme of optical illusions through use of illusionistic spaces and surfaces. My understanding and experience with the online world is that of an illusion. Information and imagery is constantly being altered to create a world where things may never be what they seem. My work utilizes the notion of illusion as an aesthetic tool to create mirage-like spaces within each painting. There comes a disconnect from the source of factual information with the creation of social media or digital imagery. On the World Wide Web everyone is able to create an “avatar” or an ideal personification of ones personality or lifestyle. It becomes an illusion of an actual state of being in the physical world. Various digital manipulation platforms allow humans to change, distort, obscure, create images or information that oftentimes mock the truth of what actually is. Photoshop, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Photo Editor Pro, Autodesk Sketchbook etc. are all ways in which the human image as well as image-making can be obscured to the liking of an individual. My focus is on digital image

making and how it inevitably creates a disconnect from the artist or an altered experience for the viewers.

III. The Digital Experience vs. The Painting Experience

As we all know there is a growing, if not fully embedded fascination or attachment with the device. It becomes a visual fixation or addiction that traps our eyes and minds from the world around us. The convenience of the device allows us to have access at any given moment to any piece of information, true or false. In this particular time period of the internet, false information and illusions are becoming somewhat of an epidemic. Whether the illusions are funny and meant to be read as so, such as a Snapchat to a friend or a fully manipulated photo of an image that completely obscures the truth of what is, it is now embedding its place in our society. This fascination and attachment with the device often replaces the physical interaction of another individual because of its seductive qualities. I find that the convenience of a screen and its seductive qualities cannot be matched by the physical interaction of another human. I believe this same interaction goes for the viewing of a physical work of art whether it's a painting, sculpture, installation or performance. Take for instance, the viewing of a traditionally constructed painting on a canvas in the shape of a flat rectangle. It is very similar to what a screen actually is, a flat square or rectangular surface that creates an illusion of what is actually present. My paintings for instance are responding to digital media and digital reality and its effects on the language of painting. Laura Owens is also a contemporary painter well known for her massive paintings that appear to be digitally rendered due to the relationship she has created with painting and digital manipulation. Our works directly reference digital mark

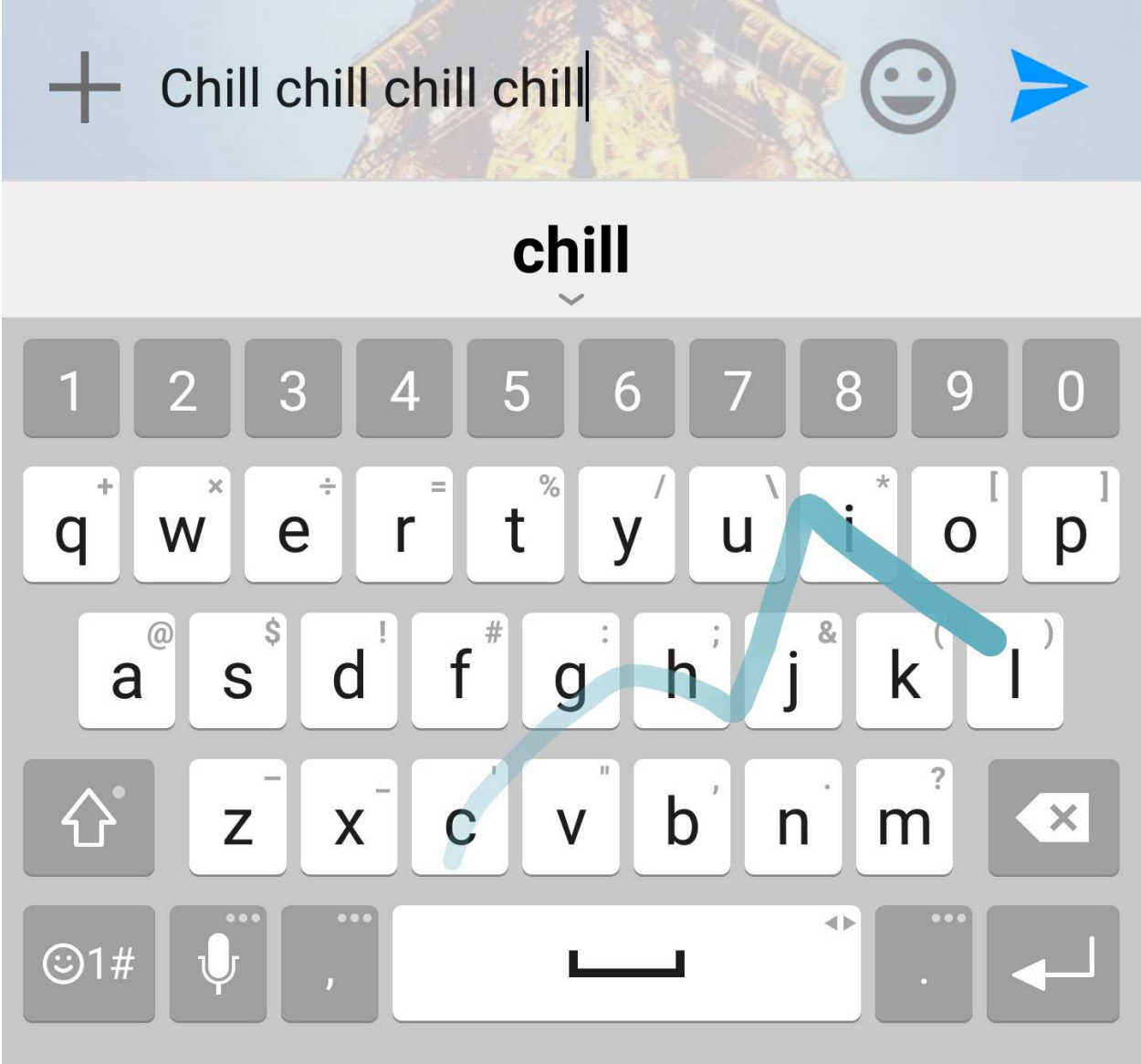
making and are contributing to the digital media conversation and how paintings are still more capable of creating an experiential presence. How paintings create this atmosphere is through their physical attributes and distinctions upon the surface. My paintings in this body of work have no intention of fully hiding the different layers and techniques used to acquire the imagery. At a distance or even up close they do create an optical illusion but there lies the evidence of how it was physically made. Physicality of paint and how it has been applied or removed is how painting sets itself apart from the experience of digital media. The sole purpose of digital manipulation is to hide evidence of how it was made or render it to a level of perfection so there is no evidence of the artist. This is where I believe a lack of experience exists within the digital realm. For instance, when a viewer stands in front of a painting, they are invited to examine its physical presence. This physical presence creates a window for the viewer to step inside the mind of the creator.



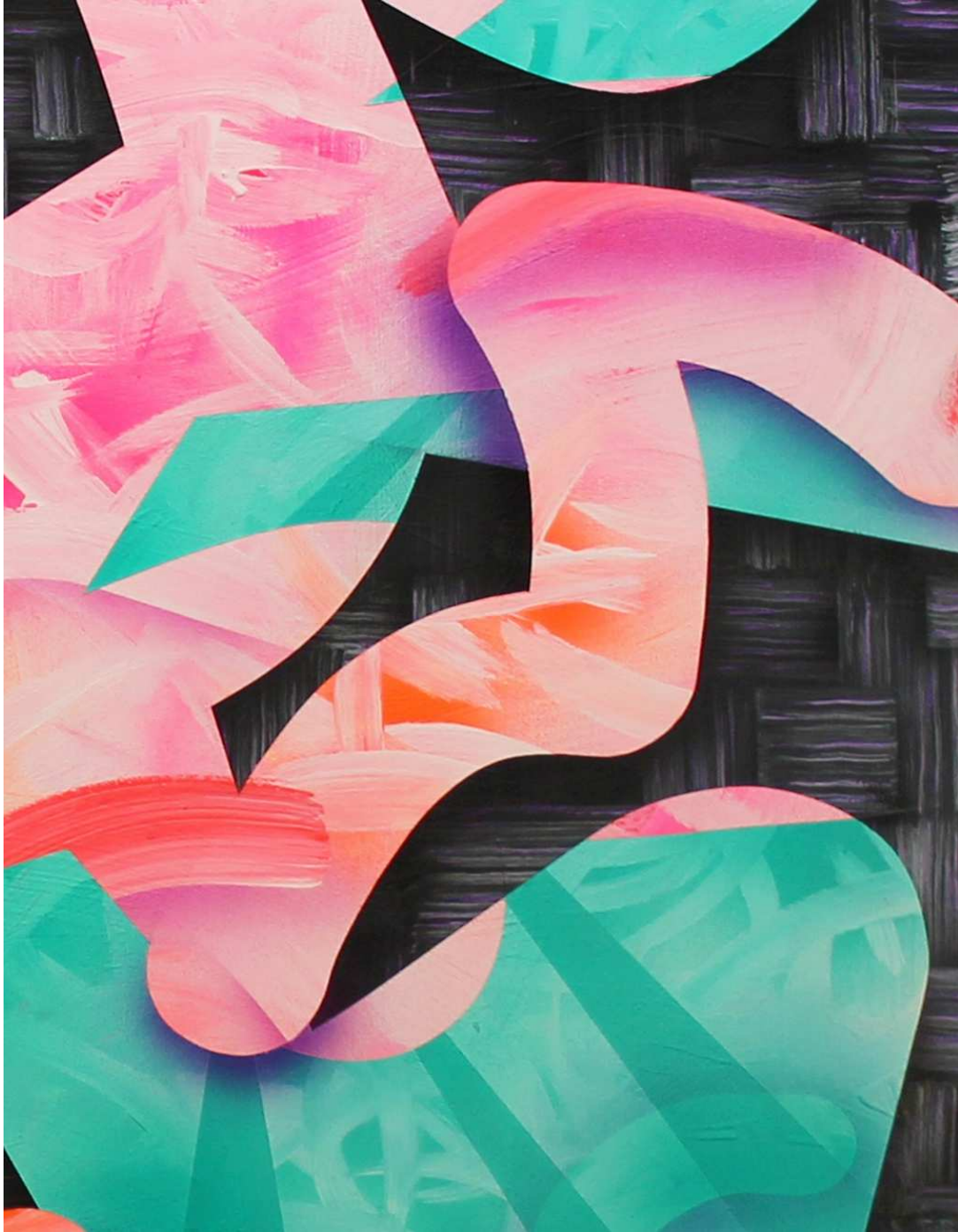
Mark Zbikowski Jr. - "cu46..." (2018 – Detail)

IV. Online Slang terminologies

Hashtag, Netflix and Chill, shit is Lit, I can't even, well played, photobomb, epic fail, LOL. This immersive connection to online culture has bred new adaptations of our verbal languages. Internet slang terms and acronyms become a way to communicate faster and or encrypt information in a phrase. These languages are carried outside the realm of the device and into our verbal languages. Because my work focuses on bridging the gap between online culture and physical space I find it fascinating when the languages of the internet merge with our physical verbal communication. Some of the terms are humorous and essentially create their own sub-language or meaning with words that already have specific meanings. One of my favorites is the coined phrase "Netflix and Chill." This phrase once the innocent introverts metaphor for voluntary solitude has evolved into the subversive connotations of a sexual act (Roose 2017). Digital culture over time has the power to alter, obscure or encrypt alternative meanings into texts. Throughout this body of work I appropriate some of these terms through my paintings in the forms of actual mark-making or excavations. These paint marks become my way of physically encrypting information on the painting surface.



Mark Zbikowski Jr. - (Swype'd text)



Mark Zbikowski Jr. - "...and chill" (2018 – Detail)

47 x 47 in.

Oil, Acrylic and Spray Paint on Canvas

V. Swype It Out

Some of the most useful text input features of some devices is the “Swype” feature, this is a feature that was developed by Swype Inc. in the early 2000’s. It allows users to enter words by sliding their finger around the keyboard from the first letter to its last, lifting only between words. This is becoming more popular with device manufacturers maybe even a standard. An individual is able to more efficiently use the keyboard function on a device with one hand. The user simply makes finger contact with the first letter of the word they are trying to type, and instead of “typing” the word out they “swype” the word. I oftentimes catch myself using this feature because of the convenience and speed of the feature. But what I find most interesting about the feature is the interesting marks it makes for a split second after the word is “swyped.” Because I am a painter I am always fascinated with types of mark-making, and so this way of mark making is literally constructing language. My body of work includes this type of mark-making as a way to encrypt messages or internet slang terms that are important or have comical value. Because the languages have this duality of meaning after filtering through the internet, my paintings use these slang terms in a “Swype” format, by capturing the term as it is swyped out on my device, and using it as a way to physically encrypt information and add aesthetic value to each work. This is all created from observing my own fingers swypes in relation to the digital keyboard. This process is an essential part of my work because I am able to create a physical relationship between my paintings and the digital space.

Here in this painting titled “...and chill” I am using the visual language of digital culture as well as the languages that are developed through my interactions with online culture. Words and phrases are constructed in this work through the use of the “Swype” feature throughout the painting. I leave it to the viewer to decipher the language or simply experience the painting for what it is. On the right edge of the painting in the middle one Swype seems to stand alone, or appear to be the end of the painted “sentence,” it is actually the word chill. Every Swype up to this one mark pertains to the act of ...and chill.



Mark Zbikowski Jr. - "...and chill" (2018)

47 x 47 inches,

Spray, Acrylic and Oil Paint on Canvas

VI. My Relationship with the Device

There is a relationship that develops with the device and its many features such as the online world and forms of digital manipulation. I oftentimes catch myself delving too deep into the many features such as the immediate satisfaction of any piece of information from the internet. But the internet is not all that draws us in to the device. It is often times the seductive nature of the object, the bright vivid delicious colors that come with that relationship and experience. I like to think of my paintings as seductive and also deceitful. The colors I use in these works are similar to those of the digital screen. They're very attractive and eye catching. The colors attract viewers to take a deeper look and with the addition of crisp high definition marks and edges, the paintings construct impossible spaces. My relationship with the device has shown me that I am attracted to vivid colors, and high definition resolution. Because we are so immersed in technology and the internet, humans are becoming more and more desensitized by the still, and satisfaction is only achieved by the motion and manipulation of imagery. I would like to argue that my static works can provide more satisfaction due to the subtle nuances in the surface created by the physical manipulation of the painting surface. It allows for a more intimate experience with the work by allowing viewers to access the physical makeup of its existence.



Mark Zbikowski Jr. - "...sucha fake artist" (2019)

74 x 74 in.

Oil, Acrylic and Spray Paint on Canvas

VII. How and Why They're Made (Layer 1)

The methodology of my painting process is inherently connected to the various forms of digital mark-making. In this body of work the formal elements and overall imagery is arranged in an explosive manner. The motion of the painting creates an exciting explosion of color, pattern and movement becoming a seductive image that captures the mind similar to effects of the device. These paintings are an exploration of different types of paint and each layer is a different kind of paint that is used in a different way. My paintings in many ways celebrate our technological ways of living and how easy it is to manipulate imagery. I consider the layers of my paintings to act as a reflection or reference to the layers most presently found in digital culture. My paintings are constantly in dialogue with and share a relationship with digital means. When starting my paintings they are similar to that of a digitally constructed image with a Layer 1 or the "underpainting." I approach each of my paintings in a very similar manner by creating a base layer that will set the tone for the rest of the painting. This first layer is often times the most intuitive and experiential process of the painting, as it allows me to be very free with my mark-making and formal decisions because it becomes the most hidden part of each painting. Using thinned out acrylic paints I begin pushing the paint around fairly quick. The wet state of the paint allows me to work each brushstroke over and over in a rapid motion. It is almost therapeutic to allow my hand and muscle memory to dictate the movement of the paint. During this early state of the paintings spray paint finds its way to the surface of the wet acrylic paint, slowly embedding itself into the plethora of wet juicy brushstrokes.



Mark Zbikowski Jr. - "Layer 1 Capture..." (2018)

This part of the process takes a while to capture the look I am trying to achieve, and usually involves a lot of pushing and pulling of the paint. Layer 1 for example in its current state appears to be a simple flat painting with subtle variations of brushwork, but the next step in constructing this layer starts to reference digital manipulation by strategically placing individual thick brushstrokes as if they were placed by the "clip art" feature. Each brushstroke is smeared

in one swift motion, however the stroke was placed is how it will remain. Each individual brushstroke separates itself from the very bottom layer by creating perceptual distance between themselves. The first real illusion of space is created in this part of the painting and begins to suggest a relationship between the laborious process of painting and the immediacy of digital technology. This is ground zero from where I will start building the rest of the painting and over the life of it, I will begin excavation and the resurrection of select areas. This first layer becomes the background or physically the farthest point back in the painting. The preservation of this layer is most important in creating these spaces. I begin assessing this layer and deciding which areas will be covered and which will be later revealed to create a whole new layer.

After this layer has been fully constructed and I feel content with the outcome, I then begin thinking about the different words that come to mind in relation to the main idea or “internet slang term” title that I have come up with. This part of my painting process I begin removing myself from my painting and turning to my personal device. This new body of work focuses on encrypting my own language and voice in the paintings as a way to include my viewers, to reflect on the dialogue between my paintings and contemporary digital culture. As previously mentioned, this process is done by observing my fingers motion across the devices keyboard. Quite often I find myself using the “Swype” feature to write texts and emails. But what is so fascinating about these “swypes” is that for a split second they create a digital mark, similar to when a painter creates a mark with paint on the canvas. That brushstroke or mark becomes the remains or an artifact of what the emotion or thought that I was trying to express at the time of creation. The “Swype” aesthetic in my works bridges the gap between the painting experience

and the digital experience. It becomes a way for me to communicate my thoughts through paint marks. The device becomes a vehicle for mark making in my paintings. When I become attached to a word or phrase I begin swyping it over and over to get a feel for the motion and direction of the mark. Kathryn Macnaughton is a painter who uses a similar aesthetic to construct her paintings, although not directly referencing her digital fingerprint. Her paintings are also creating formal contradictions by creating flat and sculptural, compiled and uniform, static and alive compositions (Bau-Xi Gallery, 2019). Our works are both playful reminders that contemporary abstraction is not entirely unfamiliar. This aesthetic created by the “Swype” becomes a stencil that preserves first layer which is by far always the most “painterly” approach to my paintings. When certain areas of this layer are covered, I feel as though I'm preserving the painter in me and allowing it to rise to the surface later throughout the life of the painting. The placement of these stencils across the painting surface is dictated primarily by my personal aesthetic view. The stencils are precisely cut to resemble the enlarged forms of the finger Swype. They are arranged around the canvas in ways that resemble the original Swype and other ways which they begin to merge with other Swypes to create a phrase. This of course is up to my viewers to decipher but is not as important as the experience of the painting as a whole. What is important about this process is the discovery of the digital marks throughout the works.

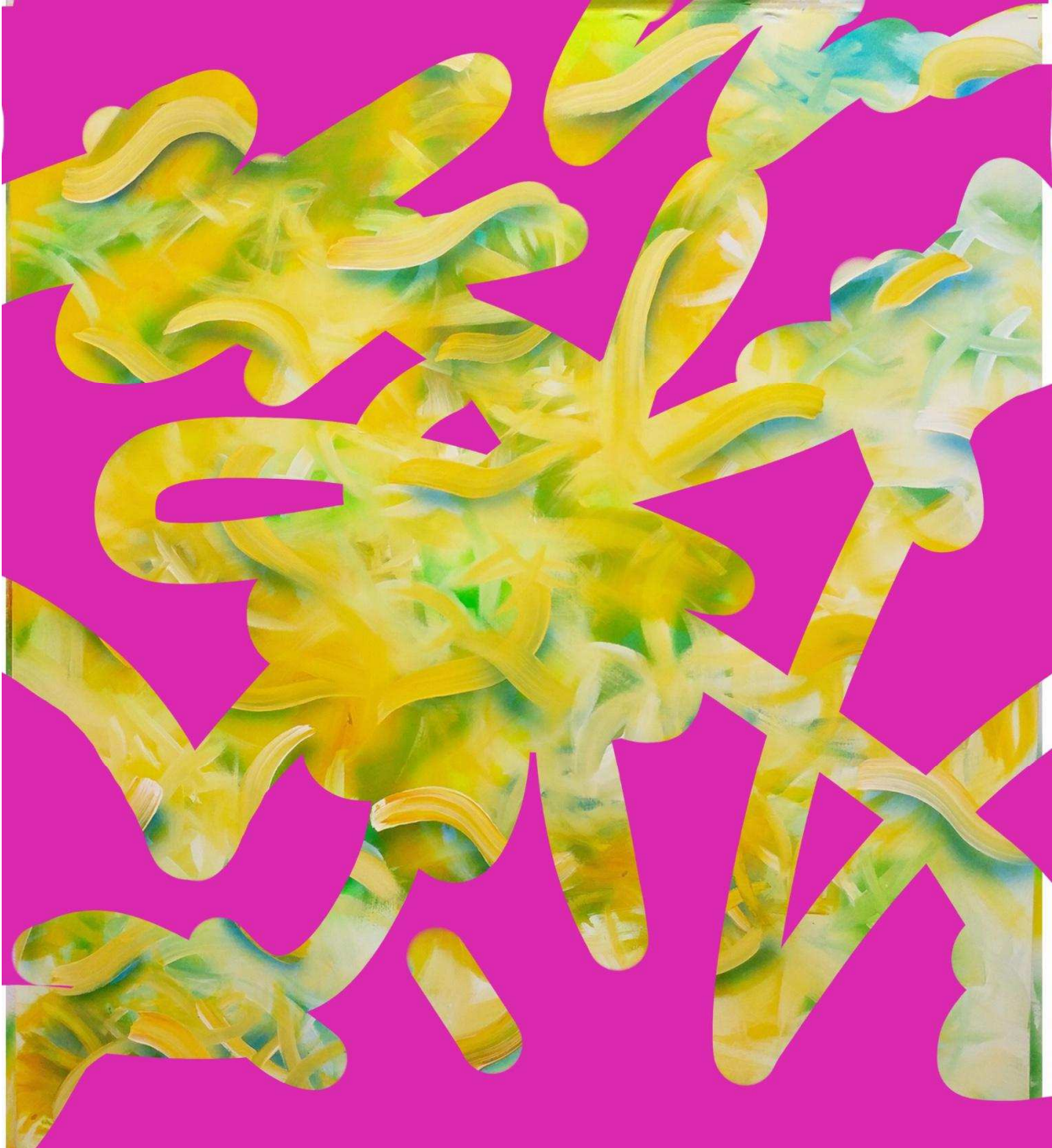


Mark Zbikowski Jr. - "Thirsty..." (2018)

47 x 47 inches

Spray, Acrylic and Oil Paint on Canvas

After my physical translations of Swypes have been laid out on the canvas, I begin thinking about the next layer, Layer 2. Since my discovery of visual manipulation platforms such as the early “Paint” application of the 90's, and the learning of the Adobe Photoshop application, I have been a firm believer of using technology as a tool or as a means to create a platform for new discovery. Morgan Blair is a contemporary painter who is notorious for using her skills in Photoshop to discover different layer options, color palettes and relationships of shapes for her paintings. Our works take a similar stance in that we both utilize digital manipulation as a tool as well as the language of the paintings (Stone 2017). Over the past couple of years I have grown to realize that using my device as a tool or a sketchbook is a much more effective method of rendering my ideas than an actual sketchbook. The immediacy of having any color or shape at any given time has allowed me to construct my ideas for paintings much quicker. There is this satisfaction of seeing somewhat of a draft before actually finishing the painting. The digital sketches that I create in order to proceed with my works operate in a similar fashion to that of an architectural draft. This process provides me with a preview of colors, shapes, and their interactions. These digital manipulation platforms act as a tool in my studio, an advanced sketchbook to help me lay things out. This also becomes a way for me to physically use digital technology to construct my paintings rather than using just its visual language. It allows me to immerse myself in the digital experience as a preparation for my studio practice.



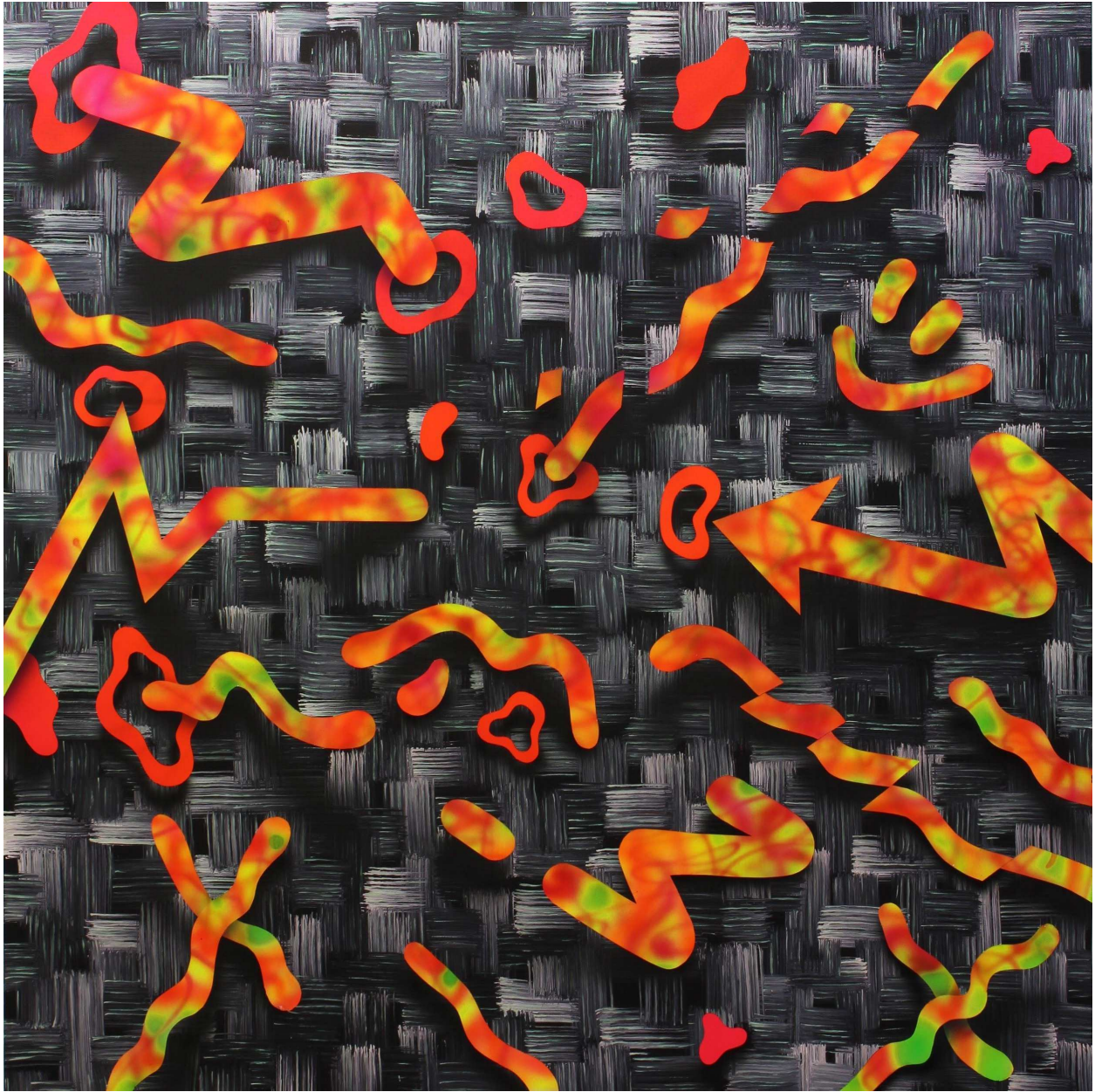
Mark Zbikowski Jr. - "Digital Sketch..." (2018)

After many different possible sketches the time comes to decide a direction for the painting. I use these digital sketches as a general direction for each painting, or a way to see interactions of color and shape but by no means are they an exact blueprint for the paintings to come. These sketches lead to the process of masking which may be one of the most prominent steps in the creation of my works. This is a process of taping off specific areas of the painting to create hard edges that begin to render a visual differentiation between layers. The masking inevitably takes on the form of an image that appears to have been erased by the “eraser” tool in a program like Photoshop. The eraser tool becomes my brush in the actual act of painting; I use it to create very gestural marks like I would apply paint with an actual paintbrush. Large amounts of masking tape are applied to create the form, or reduction of the form, of Layer 2. I am actually painting the negative space of the “digital” brushstrokes I had created in my sketches.



Mark Zbikowski Jr. - "Masking Capture..." (2018)

This excavation or absence of material created by this process of painting gives life back to the first layer by allowing it to become the reductive form in Layer 2. The interesting thing about these works is how the foreground, middle ground, and background are actually created in reverse and or mix and matched orders. Essentially Layer one is the most reductive layer or “background” in the painting but perceptually becomes the most visually physical form of the foreground. This back and forth play between positive and negatives spaces relates to my conceptualization of the illusions that are created when we as humans develop a relationship with our devices and online culture. The next layers are replicated in a similar fashion but rely heavily on a more neutral color scheme often times of black and white with subtle color variations. Layer 3 or 4 are the result of my visual interpretation of what digital space could look like in actual space. The black and white brushstrokes begin to resemble a machine like rendering of how I interpret the actual coding of the internet. It is made up of billions of “1’s and 0’s” in a precise construction of vertical and horizontal movements, similar to the layout of pixels in the interface. Once again I layout another reductive masking of the gestural eraser marks that will create a new form of both Layer 1 and Layer 2, giving them both a place in the foreground and background. This layer of masking preserves these layers while I coat the entire painting in black paint and begin systematically laying down vertical and horizontal strokes of white paint. This process is constructed during a very wet and viscous state so the two paints work together to create the imagery similar to how the black and white coding works to construct the internet.



Mark Zbikowski Jr. - "CNTL + ALT + SHIFT + LEFT" (2018)

47 x 47 inches

Spray, Acrylic and Oil Paint on Canvas

As you move through the painting, layers become covered and some layers reveal themselves in a new way. Another part of my process involves laying down very subtle drop shadows behind some of the obscure marks in my paintings to create the illusion of mistakable spaces. Before I start this process they appear to be just paint marks on the canvas. After masking more of these marks off again and placing a drop shadow, these marks begin to become objects in the painting. They jump off the surface and begin canoodling with the other various layers. This becomes my way of bringing my actual paint marks and digital paint marks to life.

VIII. The Reveal

The most exciting moments in my paintings are when I remove the masking and reveal the new relationship between the different layers I refer to as “The Reveal.” This process is the excitement that in many ways keeps me glued to the creation of my paintings due to its equal level of control and chance. My works are very controlled and precise in the way that I make them, but the Reveal is a part of my painting practice that adds a whole new layer of chance to the work. Often times when i paint I refer to my studio practice as playtime, a way to remind myself that I'm painting because I love to do it and it keeps me a child at heart. This is part of my process that truly brings me back to a time of unwrapping gifts and the sheer thrill of not knowing what was behind the masking. This is why the revealing process is so important to my works. This process is the removal of the many shapes and layers of tape that I have placed throughout the painting, this can only be physically seen by myself in the studio, but I create these paintings with the intention of giving my viewers a taste of the excitement from the revealing process. The aesthetic achieved from this process is inherently similar to the erasing

of an image in Photoshop. Visually they may be similar but how they are obtained is much different. The immediacy of these aesthetics is present when it is in the form of a digital rendering and therefore a lack of emotion and experiential qualities exists between the artist and the work. But through the process of painting it manually, an experience is born. A particular level of delicacy and patience needs to be present when physically removing the masked layers to ensure it retains its desired visual appearance. My works aim to capture this relationship that develops, to heighten my viewers overall experience of the paintings.

My paintings each go through different stages of revealing of layers, even though I know what I laid down I still never actually know what it is to come. This becomes an act of chance in my works that creates an anxious excitement that “feels like Christmas.” It is actually the most tedious part because of all the time and patience I must have to ensure I am properly sealing off and preserving the layer, so that the next layers to come do not alter the imagery. In each painting it can be seen where I have masked off and preserved certain layers but the deciphering between which layers actually came first becomes an exciting mystery.



Mark Zbikowski Jr. - "Thirsty..." (2018) – "The reveal"

47 x 47 in

Oil, Acrylic and Spray Paint on Canvas

IX. Conclusion

Sources for subject matter were oftentimes Photoshop, Paint applications, or even just my device. This allowed me to digitally manipulate my imagery and to create a platform for the evolution of my paintings. Conceptually this process allows for my physical paintings to be altered by digital manipulation. But because digital manipulation and the altering of information is now so relevant in our society, it starts to affect the way I think about painting as well as how I construct a painting. I have become very accustomed to using the “Swype” feature on my android and as an artist i find it very interesting to be able to visually see the words that i spell out by tracking my interactions and conversations with a digital device. My own digital fingerprint has become the vehicle for mark-making and conceptually it is the way in which I can physically take from digital media subject matter and re-appropriate it in the form of actual paint marks.

In conclusion this relationship that is shared between digital manipulation and my paintings, reveals the impact that digital technology has had on painting. Taking back what digital technology has taken from painting is an act of celebration for all the ways in which it has changed art making for the better or worse. Because of the long history that painting has, it is quite interesting to see the impact of such a young history. My paintings are aware of where they stand in this technological age and are determined to prove digital media unworthy of its presence in relation to painting. There is a language barrier between the two forms of art making and they are profoundly different in the ways that they create experiences. I find myself questioning the power of the experience from a digital work, while its presence and seductive

effects are ubiquitous it may not be enough. Painting will always have the advantage due to its physical characteristics, physical traces of the artist's hand, visible evidence of manipulation and a undeniable ability to capture the artists decisions that were made in the moment. Digital technology is very adaptable and has many capabilities but will never be able to fully recreate the experiential presence of the painting. I think of painting as a more effective way to perceptually describe the things that digital technology is trying to do but is failing. By building juicy surface texture and physically removing paint I am able to encrypt, archive, and reveal the history in each work all in a single painting. Our sensibility in relation to a device is limited to that of a two-dimensional screen, which in reality is nothing more than an illusion of information. In the presence of these paintings my viewers are able to physically approach them to begin discovering the three dimensionality of the manipulated layers. Even though my paintings create illusions from afar, the information they perceive in these paintings is actual. This also allows them to develop a new understanding and appreciation for my studio practice. My paintings have an experiential presence that exceeds that of the digital experience and in complex relation to familiar markers of the digital world I invite the viewer to view the digital from the physical world, to consider the digital rather than being consumed by it.

X. Bibliography

d'Arnault, Clayton. "What Is Digital Culture? – An Introduction to Digital Culturst." Digital Culturst, The Medium App, 20 Oct. 2015, digitalculturst.com/what-is-digital-culture-5cbe91bfad1b?gi=140aa3d6bb4c.

Roose, Kevin. "Netflix and Chill: the Complete History of a Viral Sex Catchphrase." Splinter, Splinternews.com, 24 July 2017, splinternews.com/netflix-and-chill-the-complete-history-of-a-viral-sex-1793850444.

Stone, Bryony. "Artist Morgan Blair on Her 'Pathological Need to Make You Laugh.'" It's Nice That, 20 Sept. 2017, www.itsnicethat.com/articles/morgan-blair-update-art-200917.

Stibel, Jeff. "Why You're Addicted to Your Phone ... and What to Do about It." USA Today, Gannett Satellite Information Network, 3 July 2017, www.usatoday.com/story/money/columnist/2017/07/03/why-youre-addicted-your-phone-and-what-do/443448001/.

Brody, Jane E. "Hooked on Our Smartphones." The New York Times, The New York Times, 9 Jan. 2017, www.nytimes.com/2017/01/09/well/live/hooked-on-our-smartphones.html.

Cotton, Charlotte. Photography Is Magic. Aperture, 2015.

Gronlund, Melissa. Contemporary Art and Digital Culture. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017.

Janson, HW, and Dora Jane Janson. Story Of Painting. Harry N. Abrams Inc. , 1996.

"Kathryn Macnaughton." Bau-Xi Gallery, bau-xi.com/collections/kathryn-macnaughton.

"Swype." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 29 Mar. 2019, en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swype.

XI. Vitae

Mark J Zbikowski Jr.

8407 Emerick Road
Baldwinsville, NY 13027
315-558-0374
www.markzibbs.com

mjzbikow@syr.edu
psychoactivearts@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/PsychoactiveArts
[Instagram: @m.zibbs_art](#)

Degrees:

- | | |
|------|---|
| 2019 | Masters of Fine Arts - Studio Arts, Syracuse University
School of Visual and Performing Arts
Syracuse NY, Concentration: Painting and Sculpture |
| 2013 | Fine Arts, State University of New York at Oswego,
Oswego NY, Concentration: Painting and Drawing |

Exhibition record:

- | | |
|------|---|
| 2019 | "Reality Check," Dowling Art Center,
1632 Harley Ave Syracuse, NY 13210 |
| 2019 | "Plans Are Cancelled," Syracuse University Art Galleries Shaffer
Hall Sims Drive, Syracuse, NY 13210 |
| 2019 | "Plans Are Cancelled," 321 Canal Street,
New York, NY 10013 |
| 2018 | "An Anthology of Irreverence," Smith Hall – University Pl,
Syracuse, NY 13210 |

- 2018 "Vintage Love," Vintage Love exhibition space – 201 E Jefferson St, Syracuse, NY 13202
- 2018 "It's In Our Blood 2.0," The OnCenter Convention Center
USBC open Championships Tournament – 800 South State Street, Syracuse, NY
- 2017 "70 Scenes," Red House Art Gallery,
(Red House Arts Center) Syracuse, NY
- 2017 "The World Around Us," The Gallery at the Tech Garden
(Tech Garden) Syracuse, NY
- 2017 "It's In Our Blood," The MoST (Museum of Science and
Technology) Syracuse, NY
Featured Sculpture: "It's In Our Blood," (10' bowling ball DNA
strand)
- 2017 "Roger Mack Exhibition Wall," featured painting: "Modern
Cubism," Shaffer Hall, Syracuse, NY
- 2016 "Dry Sweat," Smith Hall, Random Access Gallery, Syracuse
University, Syracuse, NY
- 2016 "40th Annual Juried Exhibition," Oliver Art Gallery,
University of South Florida, Tampa, FL
- 2016 "Kate Kinder and Mark Zbikowski Jr," Oliver Art Gallery, University
of South Florida, Tampa, FL
- 2015 "5th Annual 12 x 12 x 12: National Exhibit of Small-Scaled works of
art." Todd Art Gallery, Middle Tennessee State University,
Murfreesboro, TN
- 2014 "Caffeine Love or Hate?" Commercial Arts Supply,
Syracuse, NY (invitational)
- 2013 "Bachelor of Fine Arts Exhibition," SUNY Oswego,
Tyler Hall – North Gallery, Oswego NY.
Curator: Cynthia Clabough (catalogue)
- 2013 "Faces," Advanced Drawing, Pennfield Library
Oswego, NY. Curator: Juan Perdiguero

- 2013 "50th Annual Student Juried Art Show,"
Tyler Hall - North Gallery, Oswego, NY.
Curator: Mike Flanigan
- 2012 "Simultaneous Contrast," Oswego Metro Center
Syracuse, NY. Curator: Christopher McEvoy
- 2012 "6 x 6 Show," Tyler Hall, Oswego, NY
Curator: Mia Cruz
- 2012 "More than Mud, Earth, and Pigment,"
Art Association of Oswego, Oswego NY,
Curator: Bill DeMott
- 2011-12 "SUNY Oswego Annual Student Juried Art Show,"
Tyler Hall, Oswego, NY. Curator: Mike Flanigan
- 2009 "Senior Art Competition," Edgewood Art Gallery,
Jamesville, NY
- 2008-09 "Scholastic High School Art Shows," Syracuse, NY
Jurors: Scholastic Arts Committee

Awards and Honors:

- 2019 "George Vander Sluis Painting Award," presented by,
Syracuse University, College of Visual and Performing Arts
- 2018 Article: "S.U. 3rd Year Grad Student's Bowling Ball Sculpture
Greets USBC Event Bowlers at OnCenter." WAER by John Smith,
May 21, 2018
<https://bit.ly/2IWJ63O>
- 2017 Sculpture - "It's In Our Blood," Featured in -
(The International Bowlers Journal)
Article: "Bowling In His D.N.A."
July 2017, Page 13
- 2017 Sculpture – "It's In Our Blood," Featured in –
(Syracuse NewTimes)
Article: "Bowling Ball Display Strikes a Unique Balance"
By: Fran Pirano – May, 2017

- 2017 Recipient of: "Ginsburg-Klaus Art in Los Angeles Practicum Week."
Syracuse Visual and Performing Arts Program, Syracuse, NY
- 2016 Honorable Mention, 40th Annual Juried Exhibition, Oliver Art
Gallery, University of South Florida,
Tampa, FL
- 2012 Honorable Mention, 50th Student Juried Art Show, Fall 2012, Tyler
Hall - Oswego, NY
- 2009 1st Place, Edgewood Gallery Art Competition,
Jamesville, NY

Teaching and Professional Experience:

- 2018 – Present Adjunct Professor, Syracuse University – School of Visual and
Performing Arts
Introduction to Painting
Faculty Mentor: Andrew Havenhand
- 2018 – Present Woodshop & Metal Shop technician, Syracuse University – School
of Visual and Performing Arts
Shop Manager: John Harper
- 2017 - 2018 Carpenter, Syracuse Stage Theater Co. (Scene Shop)
Syracuse, NY. Fabricating walls, floors, and full scenes for Theater
performances.
Manager: (Randy Steffen)
- 2016 Paint Shop Assistant, Syracuse Stage (Paint Shop) Syracuse, NY.
Painting & Designing Stage props for Syracuse Stage.
Manager: (Holy LaGrow)
- 2016 Graduate Teaching Assistant, School of Art and Art History USF,
Spring 2016, Intermediate Painting
Professor: (Joo Woo)

- 2015 Graduate Teaching Assistant, School of Art and Art History USF,
Fall 2015, Intermediate Painting
Professor: (Ezra Johnson)
- 2015 Artist Assistant, Contemporary Art Museum, University of South
Florida, Tampa, FL
Artist: (Aya Tarek - muralist from Cairo, Egypt)
- 2012 Teaching Assistant, SUNY Oswego, Fall 2012,
Painting II, Professor: (Christopher McEvoy)
- 2012 Art Handler, Szozda Art Gallery, Syracuse NY,
Gallery Owner: (Caroline Szozda)