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dab shunt spoor

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My work functions as an act of bearing witness. In it, I process consciousness, memory, narrative and time through the choreographed integration of cerebral representations and bodily movement. Through forms both strange and elegant, I seek to activate a viewer's memory and consciousness—psychologically and corporeally.

Narrative elements underlie the gestural marks, which are formed out of a memory of a physical place or encounter from any given day. In the making, the particulars of these memory-narratives escape me, placing me in a position of grasping for mental representations while trusting the memory contained within my body and unconscious mind. In this state of un-grounding, I flirt with choreography and performance as I move back and forth between a judicious sense of presence and a suspension of such rationally organized structures. Intuition comes to the forefront, facilitating a dance between location and evasion, the obtaining and relinquishing of control, the shunting and solidifying of boundaries.

The rhythms of these movements reach an end through seemingly un-self-conscious gestures. Yet in the process, I am attentive to the experience of consciousness as it amalgamates the physical reality of such materials as canvas, oil stick, marker and paint. I intend for the range, physicality, placement and energy of the marks to entice viewers further into a psychological and corporeal relationship with themselves and with their contexts.

Seduction plays an important role in my work insofar as it relates to beauty and strangeness. Beauty, as I see it, exists in the place of the strangely familiar—in that nearly nostalgic moment that draws us back into memory in order to move us forward to the present (and into presence). And further still: to the brink of what is *almost there*—presence as met by absence, in an abstracted play of what is yet to be revealed.

Rather than reduce the complexity of viewer's individual narratives, the abstraction in the work seeks to expand it, in the same way that the re-activation and relinquishment of particular memories through mark-making seeks to expand mine. My hope is that this permeability of recognizable forms encourages viewers to fill in absences out of the tracing and retracing of their own bodies and cognitions.

These partial images, formed by traces of bodily gestures, allure for their intimately physical qualities as well as their ability to precipitate remembrance. They flow organically, at times geometrically, making it difficult for viewers to know if they are seeing a building, a face or some other vaguely familiar life thing. These forms are fragments that play off of dislocation. Some of the marks appear to be childlike scribbles, while others are weighted, dark and aged. The fits of color seek an oddly elegant harmony where muted, ordinary, mundane and dull sit next to animated, sarcastic, and vibrant dabs. However, the definition of each is in flux throughout the piece, depending on a viewer's perception of the marks relating to or isolating from another.

Through variation in scale, the works investigate a relationship to the body that includes—and moves beyond—the physicality of marks on the surface. There exists a similar sensitivity, yet distinct activity, on the surfaces large in scale and those of small order. Both seek a freedom in gesture as well as a playful dialogue with expectancy, familiarity and estrangement on the part of a viewer. Yet in the works of smaller scale, the mark-making holds a more dominant, pictorial and recognizably complete relation to the surface than in the larger pieces. There is a powerful burst of energy within the intimate form. On the other hand, the large works seek permeability—rather than dominance—of both surface and viewer. A definitive sense of completion hangs in flux, and the surface takes on a characteristic of environment as opposed to pictorial image to be grasped in one glance.

Of both measures, the work seeks to playfully disrupt assumptions of expectancy—my own as well as viewers. Shown in chorus with each other, the contrasting scale of the works seeks to further engage the psychological and corporeal experience for the viewer. It is through this disruption of expectancy, and the incompatibility of familiarity and estrangement, that I intend for viewers to be invited into encounters with the spoor of the whole self—their whole self—where, in surrendering to the seduction, there is the possibility of awakening consciousness.

Jen Grabarczyk
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