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Falling Apart While Awake

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Falling Apart While Awake

Crystal Erlendson conceals surfaces with irreverent, ornamental gestures to reveal a daft logic in space. Her paintings stem from the responsibility to act irresponsibly. She participates in injurious and irreverent action to her paintings as way to break up the ho-hum and sterility of surfaces that psychologically constrict us. Memory is invariably part of viewing; forms may feel familiar—imagery alludes to fanciful arrangements of architecture, wall motifs, landscapes and/or reckless human mark making. However, the goal of her work is to not to strike a sense of nostalgia, but rather pursue the unstable truth of our experience in space through paintings that interfere with our logic of the surface.

The painting's surfaces are comprised of layers of pattern, color, and gesture that follow a haphazard, self-deprecating rationality. Finger painting patterns poke fun of the "artist's hand", textures are indulgent and the gestures seem self-cancelling. Most paintings don't find completion until a final dramatic gesture where the logic of where the painting was supposed to go is reversed- the painting may be covered entirely by stripes, or wall paper is stapled to the very center of it, or an entirely new painting is adhered over an already finished one. She seeks a primal state of creativity in order to create an illogic that opens doors to making new space.

Generous handlings of paint, wall paper and joint cement conceal the surface to act as a new façade to the wall. The work tends to inhabit a hybrid state - a sculptural painting that can also act as an architectural modifier. The flatness and finish of screens, hi-tech building materials, advertisements, and commercial objects generously impel her desire for tactility. The work is anti-iphone - raw, fractured, and slow to read. The more dependence society puts on technology the more necessary it will be to provide objects with dimensionality and show the memory of body in space. It is a way of making the old world new again- destabilizing our experience of looking by providing a temporary relief and a dopey, yet seductively hermetic interruption.