

1-1-2014

# ROPE-A-DOPE

Gabriel L. Perez  
*Claremont Graduate University*

---

## Recommended Citation

Perez, Gabriel L., "ROPE-A-DOPE" (2014). *CGU MFA Theses*. Paper 88.  
[http://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgu\\_mfatheses/88](http://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgu_mfatheses/88)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the CGU Student Scholarship at Scholarship @ Claremont. It has been accepted for inclusion in CGU MFA Theses by an authorized administrator of Scholarship @ Claremont. For more information, please contact [scholarship@cuc.claremont.edu](mailto:scholarship@cuc.claremont.edu).

## Why Not

I make paintings that start as one thing and end as another. A visual idea with a set of materials is my starting point and will inevitably end somewhere else. This is true no matter the duration of production, whether it is one day or one month, time and its changes shape the outcome of my pieces. Obstacles I encounter are met with excitement because I know the resulting “solution” will create its own kind of beauty. Solutions include the obvious ways of making a painting, but can reach into using everyday objects or doing things the wrong way on purpose. I allow the materials to dictate the action and the aesthetic sometimes, which gives me new ideas for production. Basically, nothing is off limits when it comes to a mode of production or what is considered a useable material. I lean on the skills that continue to snowball, and can hardly keep up with the endless new opportunities that arise daily.

Decision-making is the most fun part of making a painting—I get to decide what is right and wrong all day. It’s a mini-chaos experienced for the day, yet with the indefinable goal of “harmony”, for lack of a better term. ‘Harmony’ does not suffice because sometimes this harmony is actually agitation, disruption, confusion, excitement, or even pleasure. ‘Pleasure’ is not a dirty word and is in fact my most preferred personal experience when creating and consuming art. Yet this pleasure can come from the most adverse of situations, hence the allowance of chance opportunities in order to encounter the new. I am making the final decision on when to stop, but am distracted by a plethora of possibilities.

Variety is at the center of the decadent swirls I stumble upon. I add and subtract, push and pull, until the actions, materials, and decisions have stacked up to digest the

monster that becomes my piece. Of course I mean the happiest and most inviting of “play-with-me” monsters that one can touch. They can even become short-stacks: not requiring a significant amount of marking or handling, as a sensorial interest can come from a simple combination of things. I graciously supply a colorfully rich combination of items that organize a composition resembling abstraction, figures, or life. There is no referential goal for the object as a whole, simply an experiential one. The use of nonsensical items, or contemporary items used in nonsensical ways, supplies enough referential fodder that art’s history hasn’t supplied already. In order to compose I curate any number of objects and marks that make up a painting that stands or hangs on its own, with a new set of beliefs, ideas, and words to come from it.

I create from everyday items, coming from everyday people. I do not think that what I create is too difficult for anyone to understand but I know that although I created it, it eludes me. Plastic containers, disposables, and clothing reach out to eyes that see them differently. I’m not trying to make people see things differently; I’m just trying to make you look. Call it theatrics but with a history of various performance experiences, I am not above pulling a cheap trick to get your attention. Nor will I shun the lingo and logic of decoration since I am already using its tools. The further I extend my understanding of what is art and how to make it, the more people it can reach. This may sound stupidly simple but so is connection and combination.