

From the show Shadow Boxing at Over The Influence Los Angeles CA 2023

How do you approach the blank canvas?

When I began seriously painting again after years of sculptural work, I wanted to carry some of the qualities of working with sculptural materials into my painting process, so I decided that working on raw linen was a good start. The gold gray color was familiar and reminiscent of working with clay which is the medium I originally worked with as an artist some 40 years ago. I also wanted to activate the surface visually but without direct intention. So, I do a reverse gesso process whereby I paint the backs of the linen with watered down gesso and let it bleed through the fabric which creates a sort of atmospheric haze on the surface. Then by the time I start working on the surface there is already something to engage with and I feel less compelled to try and make something happen and can approach my painting process with more improvisation.

- What part, if any, does being in LA play in the work?

I think the atmosphere in LA is more like an object than a gas. There is a mix of water vapor coming off the ocean and emissions from any number of human activities that create a density to the atmosphere that interacts with the light in unusual ways. When a sunset happens in LA you see all these saturated saccharine colors that are extraordinary, but I know they are generated from light passing through a range of unnatural gases. It is incredibly compelling and engaging on some level, but it's also engaging in the way seeing a car accident is.