

ISLIP ART MUSEUM STORE EXHIBITION

Alexander Percy: The Texture of Color

Curated by Jay Schuck



Trapped, 2011

January 18 - March 29, 2015
Reception: February 8, from 1 - 4

ALEXANDER PERCY: THE TEXTURE OF COLOR

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ALEXANDER PERCY

THE TEXTURE OF COLOR

Jay Schuck, Museum Curatorial & Exhibitions Assistant

On view in the Museum Shop of the Islip Art Museum is a selection of paintings by Alexander Percy. Percy's abstract paintings examine the formal elements of fine art, such as shape, space, texture and color as well as their subsequent relationships with one another. His paintings focus on the materiality of paint, subsequent forms and shapes, and expression through color.

In regards to color, the artist breaks from traditional color theory, exploring how different colors interact with one another and the effects different combinations of color have on the finished work. *Trapped* consists of a mostly yellow painted canvas with a cavern of built up layers of red paint appearing across the central axis. On top of the red, Percy generously applies the yellow paint, which occupies two-thirds of the pictorial plane. In the work, Percy gives the illusion that the yellow paint is still in the process of suppressing the red as it washes over the color. If the title is meant to guide the viewer to a certain conclusion, one nonetheless has a sense of enclosure and surrender as the red band of paint succumbs to the engulfing yellow that has overtaken the entirety of the canvas, encasing it forever within itself.

The Mystery of a Life in Green finds the artist exploring the color green. The vertical piece is painted almost uniformly green with hints of yellow appearing through the canvas from beneath. The inclusion of yellow perhaps emphasizes the relationship between the two colors as green, a secondary color, derives from the combination of yellow and blue, both primary colors. Three-quarters of the painting's surface appears relatively smooth with the final section, just above the horizontal central axis, covered in an encrusted layer of built up paint that appears to be pushing up and down. By allowing the paint to dry in such a manner, Percy highlights the materiality of the media and juxtaposed the smooth and encrusted textures it can create.

For Percy, painting is a cathartic experience as emotions flow through the artist's brush onto the canvas. Heavy brushstrokes leave a trail traveled by the artist across the entirety of his canvases that evoke a wide range of different emotions. Whether or not it was intentional, *Homesick* and *Pilgrim's Revolution* seem to form a pair of opposites. The two are the same size and both find the artist using the formal elements of fine art to express a certain emotion.

Homesick finds the artist utilizing a warm palette filled with reds, oranges, and yellows that are blended together or applied to the canvas in clumps that are left to harden, or are spread out by the palette knife. The gestural swirls, along with the warm colors, washes over the viewer in a manner similar to overpowering sadness, which often accompanies homesickness. *Pilgrim's Revolution*, by contrast, is the opposite. The piece consists of a cool palette, filled with blues, white, and black, which are applied in jagged waves or tight swirls that connote anger, an emotion commonly associated with revolutions and other acts of violence. It is interesting to note that Percy juxtaposes the color of each painting with the gestural manner in which they are applied. One would expect for a painting designated for sadness, he would have utilized a cooler palette (ex: to have the blues) while a painting designated to express anger he would have used warm colors (ex: to be red with anger). By disregarding traditional color theory, he opens his work to new interpretations, allowing the viewer to experience the work, and their consequent emotions, in an uninhibited manner.

Percy was born and raised in Puerto Rico, and graduated from the University of Puerto Rico in San Juan with degrees in painting and art history. In 2005, Percy moved to New York City, where he now lives and works. He has participated in a number of exhibitions and art fairs around the world including Art Shanghai in China, Art Basel in Miami, and ArtHamptons in Southampton.

Alexander Percy: The Texture of Color runs in conjunction with the museum's main exhibition, ***Remembering Things Past***, which features foreign-born artists who incorporate past interests, memories, and experiences of their home country into their artwork. Both exhibitions are on display at the Islip Art Museum from January 18 – March 29, 2015 with a reception on Sunday, February 8, from 1 – 4pm.

WORKS EXHIBITED



Alexander Percy

Trapped, 2011

Oil on canvas

42 x 42 in.

\$1,800



Alexander Percy
The Mystery of a Life in Green, 2011
Oil on canvas
32 x 48 in.
\$1,500



Alexander Percy

Homesick, 2007

Oil on canvas

36 x 36 in.

\$1,200



Alexander Percy
The Pilgrim's Revolution, 2007
Oil on canvas
36 x 36 in.
\$1,200

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January 18, March 29, 2015

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Beth Giacommo, **Museum Exhibition Director & Curator**

Jay Schuck, **Museum Curatorial & Exhibitions Assistant**

Eric Murphy, **Museum Intern & Docent**

Vanessa Nguyen, **Museum Intern**

Islip Art Museum

50 Irish Lane

East Islip, NY 11730

www.islipartmuseum.org

631-224-5402

The Islip Art Museum is a division of the Town of Islip Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs. The Islip Art Museum is managed by the Islip Arts Council, a non-profit corporation dedicated to leadership, advocacy, and excellence in the arts by presenting, producing, and promoting culturally responsive, high quality programs for diverse populations in varied artistic disciplines.

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