

ARTIST STATEMENT

The Game of Golf

Certain parallels exist between the game of golf and the process of painting. This series of works is a synthesis of those parallel elements highlighting the study of decision-making in both endeavors. Serendipity, quirkiness and the elements of chance and luck continually present themselves in each activity. Though one may plan or plot a certain course, the inherent variables guarantee that one never really knows what might happen in the end; therefore, I have found it is best to playfully enjoy the process.

Weather, light, wind and varying ground surfaces are just some of the natural elements golfers encounter as the dynamic of the game is revealed. Every shot a golfer approaches presents itself anew as the reference points shift and change in the progression of the game. The process is much the same in painting as form, motion and spatial relationships are constantly re-examined. The quality and nature of optical information in painting is also continually affected by the size, shape, position, hue and brightness relationships on the canvas surface. Since form, motion and spatial relationships between human beings and their immediate natural surroundings are of great concern in golf as well as in painting, it is my fervent hope that this series of paintings mirrors the playful experience of these particular elements made manifest.

At their very inception I utilize photographic images of golfers in the making of these paintings because I like the idea of the photographs capturing a single, fleeting moment in both, time and space that fixes the subject matter in its immediate surroundings. However, later on in the process, I un-fix or release the images by transforming them from still figures to freed forms consisting of line, shape and color on the surface of the paintings. I re-make them (from photographs or images of actual people to shapes) so that they take on an entirely new characteristic; that simply of invented form. At this point they cease to be figurative images. Rendered simply as visual information comprised of line, shape and color, these forms present an opportunity to further explore or investigate the nature of paint on the canvas without restraint.

The paint is fluid in both, its application and the layering technique I employ to build up the color fields and the visual surface relationships. The paintings do not fix a single moment in time; rather, they reveal the ongoing process of applying and reducing layers of paint during numerous visitations to the surface of the canvas over a period of time. Further, the brush strokes reveal the sheer physicality of moving paint around on the canvas. The build-up or reduction of layers of coloring in the process of creating these color fields is indicative of my concern for motion. The color fields reveal the dynamic of motion, decision-making, and thoughtfulness as they relate to the forms introduced on the canvas surfaces.

The spatial relationships I have established in the paintings will hopefully encourage viewers to question whether the pieces can be read simply as “figure” and “ground.” If the viewers are fully engaged with the pieces, they will find that these terms or references are inapplicable in this instance. If they further interact with the paintings, they might playfully accept the invitation to experience the spatial relationships as “form” and “color field” instead. Painting (like golf) is both, playful and fun. Just when it seems that the form either sits atop the color field or emerges from its very depths – it becomes apparent that the elements of form and color field exist together on the surface of the paintings as equal forces. Form in this case is no more important than color field; likewise, the color fields do not dominate the forms.

In both, the process of painting and the game of golf, one cannot be concerned with outcomes. The continual dynamic of decision-making marks the experience. It is this experience of playfulness that gives shape and definition to these two endeavors.

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