

Lisa Stefanelli

Artist's Statement 2008

Years of employment in television production have warped my mind. I have come to not only understand the concept of “production value”, but to allow it to infiltrate my pursuits as a painter. To know production value, to me, is to understand how to create visual fraud. It is the seamless manufacturing and presentation of an image which defies observation. It is a place which exists somewhere beyond the boundaries of our natural world. To this manufactured place is where my paintings intend to go.

By choosing unintelligible colors, the underpaintings become a softened solitude of space. The sprayed backgrounds are anti-colors. They are colors which are designed to defy observation: the color of your computer keyboard for instance. Although I refer to these colors as that of my computer keyboard, they are initially found through observations in the natural world. The color of the dug up earth bleaching in the sun is the color of my computer keyboard. The gray sky prior to an August thunderstorm and the night sky in January similarly find postmodern references. These colors are compelled by nature, but secured by our modern world. We are prompted by the natural world, but hooked by modern life.

After the initial spray coating which creates a visually clear and concise image of color, there is always a moment when I wonder if there is really a need to continue. Faced with a seamless surface with so much intrinsic wonder, what is the point of continuing? But I am after all descended of Italian stonemasons, and the blue collar work ethic which ran through the veins of my ancestors clings tenaciously to my blood as well. It would be simply impossible to let the paintings go forth into the world prior to “clocking” several hundred hours upon them. Time and pain makes everything more interesting to a descendant of Roman mentality.

The imagery of the paintings take form through red lines. Red, the color when in paint form, has an extended drying time...which technically makes it more adaptable. In paint form, the pigment red is more difficult to work with, and it is more expensive.

It applies associations to all of us because it is the color of each of us. It is a politically important color. It assumes so many aesthetic alliances it is inherently confusing. It is extremely elaborate in its effects, but if afforded the perfect amount of compromise, it graces us with one of the most soothing sensations available to us through color.

The color red, as an attribute of the world, (an inherent quality, a distinguishing quality) is always there. It is something other than the absence of yellow and blue- and, thus, when that red becomes less red, it becomes more one or the other. It never exists in a linguistic condition of degradation or excess that must necessarily derive from our expectations.

There is a unity in the movement of the images. This movement depicts a flocking tendency. One gesture moves in accordance with another. Singular destination is not an option. The images

move forward into a time yet to come...but not simply and quietly, but within the confines of a whirlwind. They gain ground, as in a flock, current or swell similar to the pattern of human experience in nature, the same human experience which measure an ever-recurring cycle that returns without fail to the point from which it begins.

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