

Sara Robichaud: Double Life

Double Life is a series of large and small scale acrylic paintings that are material in nature and linked to a personal narrative.

I am compelled to make work that is visceral – to examine the innate qualities of paint and the forces that act upon it. I have devised a narrowed set of formal parameters for constructing my paintings. In some respects it occurs like a puzzle to solve with each action dictating a whole new range of possibilities. I spend a lot of time looking and thinking, strategizing for the next move.

The process of laying down tinted gesso, using tape to outline forms, and scraping viscous gels has a resonance with collage. The resulting shapes become object-like and play off surrounding negative space.

I am interested in the dichotomies of paint – thin and thick, matte and gloss, saturated and neutral, textured and flat, concentrated and sparse, the manipulation of depth of field etc. and use them to create visual tension to question my own notions of beauty. Metaphorical dualities are also at play; antique/modern, interior/exterior, feminine/masculine, domestic/manufactured, childlike/sophisticated etc. add complexity and depth to formal investigations.

Repetitive tasks that make up my process help me to focus and allow my imagination to take hold. Connections that I make, and the ensuing shapes generated, take on a life of their own and appear on the surface sometimes without immediate recognition.

The impetus of my process is an intuitively chosen meaningful object – a bathroom fixture, a bone, lace. The experience is tangible, happening spontaneously and informed by aesthetic preferences. Intentional references are also at play with passages that I find interesting, awkward or beautiful. The forms are almost always organic and point to the body.

The paintings become part of my life, and are not separate from its most personal or pivotal moments acting to reflect emotional and physical memories.

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