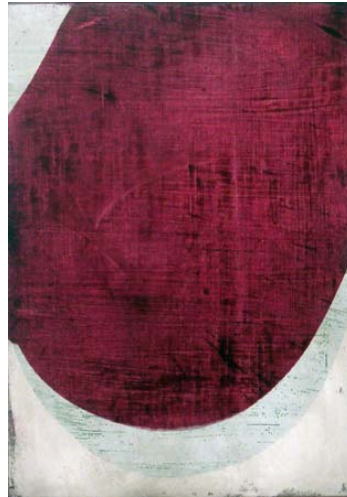


Antonio Murado at Holly Johnson Gallery through February 11  
by Todd Camplin

New York based artist Antonio Murado is an Abstract Alchemist and his experiments in paint are currently displayed at Holly Johnson Gallery. Known for his abstract paintings with meandering overlapping lines and white paintings with abstract flower petals, this show includes the white paintings, but also something a little more related to the body.



Black Bear 2011



Manto, 2011

There is a great interview of Antonio Murado on Youtube where he talks about his process. He reminds me of some potters at UNT telling their stories of creating work. The idea of chance and not knowing what the final work will become is like a potter placing glazed pots in a kiln. Both generally know what to expect, but the art makes some of its own decisions based on gravity, chemistry, and physics. Murado and the potter are in part making, but also guiding their art to a finished product.

Antonio Murado also talked about how his work related to landscape. And when it comes to most abstract art, I would agree with this comparison, but his "Mantos" works, seem to be more figurative than landscape. The title "Mantos" suggests a pleasurable body in view and on your mind. Each painting has a curve or a fold of a cropped shape. The surface is painted in luscious oil and what I see as a figure almost laid on like a stain, soaking into the canvas, and on the edge of translucency.

The focused color of violet, green, black, or red is painted on a soft white background, which makes the colors all that more rich and complex. My list of colors really cannot do the work justice, because no one label can completely describe the fullness of color Murado is able to achieve in each painting. I really enjoyed the textural quality of these paintings. The white areas were ruff, while the color seemed to pool on, which slightly smoothed out the surface like flesh. These paintings are more sensual and celebrate the organic ecstasy of shape.

Now the front of the gallery did have some of the white works with petals, and I enjoyed them a great deal, but I was repeatedly drawn back to the body forms. I was seduced by the domain shape of color in each painting. The highly acclaimed Spanish artist Antonio Murado will have his paintings up until Saturday, February 11th at Holly Johnson Gallery.

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