

## **Ideas, methods and techniques**

Can I turn paint and marks into an image that somehow feels real or gives us a sense of reality – essential reality? Can I make an abstracted image feel like a very real person?

Rather than mimic the world, can I illuminate a world beyond mere illusion? Can I actually cause you to move beyond interpreting my paintings as illusions of reality and instead cause you to perceive and experience reality?

To truly experience this body of work you must be willing to take part in a subjective narrative of your own making. My portraits are informed by my interest in the visual brain and ideas of the seminal cubists. With an ambiguous expression and uncertain context, I hope to provoke viewers into completing my portraits with their own mental image, narrative and emotion - to turn inward to create a subjective reality.

We are attracted to faces – it is our nature. Eyes dominate and hold our interest. I create elevated intimacy via shared gaze. I use metallic, iridescent and interference acrylic paint that changes with lighting and view angle. I often paint multi-views or differing facial planes and features that are slightly out of alignment. I frequently paint slightly different expressions for each side of the face. Witnessing these small changes might make these images appear more real as if time, half remembered memories, after images and prior experiences were affecting our perception.

If I engage you with eyes then I can also start to do other things peripherally with line and color. I can color outside of the lines and your mind will resolve it. Vague and scribbled outlines and graphic vectors become part of a recognizable whole while a hint of “unreal” complimentary and equal value color causes the eyes to seem life-like. I experiment with the amount and type of information required to evoke an image and to find those characteristics that cause the viewer to emotionally respond to the portrait.

All of my paintings start with a live model and then I work from reference photographs. I use a limited pallet of acrylic paint. I vary the coverage, spraying varnish between layers and then scrubbing, scraping, scratching or sanding the surface while applying a variety of marks – strokes, dots and other adjustments.

These paintings tend to be layers of fresh starts. I believe I might have a finished face one day but soon I brush, flow or spill paint all over the surface, leaving traces - a template to guide the next iteration. In the end I am attempting to facilitate ever-shifting emotional experiences through the use of changing and alternate points of view, engaging gaze, uncertain context, elusive emotion and naturalistic cues.