

Trash Towers

This installation combines my “Light Cycle” series of paintings with my new “Trash Towers” sculptures. To see how these two, separate but inherently similar, ideas can mesh to probe deeper emotions and expand insight. Layers upon layers.

The paintings were created as a panoramic series with each piece keyed to relate to the palette of the adjacent canvas. The broad spectrum of colors explored in these works has allowed me to engage in visual conversations about color, light and surface. Exploring the qualities of light and color that play across the surface textures of time worn walls. They are layered with scraps of recycled paper and impasto juxtaposed against transparent washes of color. Veils of light and atmosphere are used to merge values and dissolve shapes; creating a dialogue between interwoven marks and atmospheric dissolution of form. The juxtaposition of painted over areas with *pentimenti* (marks visible from the under painting), leave shards of information that lure the viewer to explore beneath the surface.

As this work evolved I became interested in translating these conversations about color, light, and materials into three-dimensional forms. The “Trash Towers” (made with recycled trash and eco-friendly paints) are, in essence, three-dimensional paintings. I have great admiration for the sustainable art and architecture that I have discovered on my travels, such as: Japanese *Boro* – textiles, made from recycled fabric that has been patched or mended; Houses in Fustat, Egypt built by garbage collectors with clay, broken pots and oil cans; and the architecture in Phonsavan, Laos made from recycled missile and bomb casings (remnants from the USA's "Secret War" in Laos). The use of these throwaway, mundane materials to create beautiful textiles and dwellings, I find both inventive and heroic.

In creating the “Trash Towers”, recycled materials were obtained from an Albertus Magnus College community trash pick up, personal trash, and discarded cardboard shipping materials. The painted surfaces of the “Towers” both conceal and reveal the archeology of cultural debris, as materials and process are exposed through transparent layers of paint. The sculptures themselves suggest architectural forms while also having anthropomorphic and political associations. Defined shapes and colors are used to imply group identity. Intentionally placed off-kilter, these forms, in dialogue with one another, create visual conversations about balance and community, implying a wide range of metaphoric associations. In sum, I see the sculptural works as extrapolations of my paintings, and by showing the works together a new dialogue develops across media and between colors and forms.