

1100 words:

I am asked, frequently, how I pick my colors. One instructor, George Dugan at SUNY Cortland, confused me for years with his landscape painting “advice” that “the forest isn’t green.” Only years after that did I realize, after making an acrylic sketch plein air landscape underpainting using every color but green then scraping a transparent green wash over the surface did I understand what he meant. Later I was instructed at NYU by artist Michael St. John to claim my colors, but it was up to me to figure out how to do so; my choices would be rooted in my personal philosophy which would then manifest itself in my work. Finally, theorist Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe at Art Center said that visual art needs some kind of involuntariness built into it to succeed -- this is what heightens a work’s presence in the room. These influences are where I begin: starting with questions regarding reductive amplification, taking a position on the power relations germane to colorizations, then exploring how those aspects combine to create aesthetic structures requiring attention.

I use colors which are readymade but never straight from the tube. Frank Stella’s assertion that “color is already perfect straight out of the can” is too click + drag for me; all my colors are mixed and/or color-corrected by me in advance, even my primaries. A friend recently asked me the difference between video color in light -- as in my video painting-in-motion installations -- and the video color in my recent paintings, made mainly with acrylic paint. She observed that acrylic should be dull, but in my paintings the vibration and halation are nearly as loud as in oil, which refracts light more powerfully. Where is the work, she asked, and I say both in the painting and in the video, which are made concurrently. A key unifying aspect is that my colors are loaded: they are “drunk with signal,” with all the meanings that statement takes on, whether perceptual, semiotic, electronic, or all three at once.

My work is about the actions of rematerialization: compression and unpacking. A small hand-painted mark, when projected, becomes huge on the wall; a digitally collaged hand made mark gets reproduced by hand, using a similar action with real paint, out of proportion to the collage, never 1:1 and never drawn to approximate action (as in Koons or Lichtenstein). The action is repeated in larger proportion in amplified color -- even my grays have co-reactive chroma built in. I overload pixels in the physical experience of my installations while also exaggerating the material qualities in an object, which is how I view painting. I overload surfaces with underpainting to get acrylic to behave as video, to transpose that rhythmic throb of the scan lines into materiality. All this begins with color. An individual color can’t perform universally as a sign due to inconsistencies of language and physical location, but after globalization color palettes most certainly are associative and get compressed into sign systems and used for construction.

I use palettes taken from forms of communication: flesh tones (sex), NTSC video color (propaganda), acid (chemical/hallucination) and primary/secondary colors (art world/art historical). These are the four palettes I choose because their signs are built in; they are color systems with ready-made meaning. Combining these palettes creates electric vibrations -- the eye “snaps,” the nerves go haywire, one’s involuntariness kicks in,

revealing a glitch in how we see, engaging instinct in the translation. Readymade meanings and associations of others can't be trusted when experiencing the work, whether painting or video. Movement, influenced by composition, is liberated by autonomic eye reactions responding to locality and edge of specific marks on an equally specific field. This means a handmade gesture is always combined with a machinic process of some kind, and vice versa, in both video and painting. In my work the romance of painting is expendable, even undesirable -- too sentimental and nostalgic. I aim to rematerialize technological states of nature as experienced in our contemporary world.

Colors I select out are as important as colors I include. Representation of "natural" landscape or portraiture is denied in my work. Traditional notions of "nature" are not where I live, what I experience everyday, something I pine for or wish to "return to," despite my rural upbringing. My preferred green is video green, also functioning as acid green. My only use for terra verte is as underpainting for flesh tones, then only to turn vibrance down. Flesh tones (derived from earth tones) exist in my world as components of bodies meant for sex, violence and desire, the only places where "nature" still exists for me in everyday life. Primary and secondary colors are ideological in their "purity" as art historical or design pointers, but purity doesn't exist in my world. I am a mutt to my core, as is my body of work and the colors I use to build it. My palettes are always hybridized, cross-pollinated and mashed-up between painting into video. The colors of these palettes are always in motion.

The toxic uncanniness of color leaking from video into painting is present in contemporary life, and I embrace it. Cross-referencing of color between palettes generates experiential and semiotic affect from work to work, with a range of dynamics in both still and moving actions and images. For example, primary blue next to video magenta atop fleshy Naples yellow with warm acidic black and cold basic white is an alienating selection, with meanings altering radically when each takes a turn as dominant color from work to work. Only by exaggerating these colors within their palette limitations (flesh, video, acid, primary) then relocalizing colors between palettes (as outlined above) can I conjure the world as I experience it. Our world is an omninational location of numerous languages which I can access but can't speak. It's made up of compressed geometries unpacked by speed, glamour and the disjunctive rupture of travel. Our world is a place where actions are at once heightened then brought low by technology, a home which is by definition rootless, with all the desire, pain and ecstasy that entails. The colors I claim must reflect this experience.

These abstract actions are what I paint into objects and set into motion with video. Power relations between handmade reality and the click + drag mentality are often conflicted, frequently beautiful, and sometimes hard to watch, but always colorful as they surround us 24/7. I engage, exaggerate, and entice these agencies available through color into my work as an artist.

300 word abstract:

I have been asked frequently how I pick my colors. I begin with questions regarding reductive amplification, then take a position on power relations germane to specific colorizations before finally exploring how those two aspects combine to create aesthetic structures requiring attention.

My colors are readymade but never straight from the tube. A key unifying aspect is that my colors are loaded; they are “drunk with signal,” with all the meanings that statement takes on, whether perceptual, semiotic, electronic, or all three at once.

My work is about compression and unpacking inherent to actions of rematerialization. An individual color can't perform universally as a sign due to inconsistencies of language and physical location, but after globalization color palettes are associative and get compressed into sign systems used for construction.

I use palettes from forms of communication: NTSC video color (propaganda), flesh tones (sex), acid (chemical/hallucination) and primary/secondary colors (art world/art historical). I aim to rematerialize technological states of nature as experienced in our contemporary world.

Colors I select out are as important as colors I include; for instance, romantic representations of “natural” landscape or portraiture are denied in my painting. My palettes are always hybridized, cross-pollinated and mashed-up between painting into video and vice-versa; they're also in constant motion.

The toxic uncanniness of color leaking from video into painting is present in contemporary life, and I embrace it. Our world is a place where actions are at once heightened then brought low by technology; a home which is by definition rootless, with all the desire, pain and ecstasy that entails. Colors I claim must reflect this experience.

These abstractions are what I paint into objects and set into motion with video; engaging, exaggerating, and enticing agencies available from color into my artistic production.