

An abstract painting featuring a complex composition of overlapping, translucent layers. The color palette is dominated by vibrant reds and oranges on the right side, which transition into cooler blues and teals on the left. The brushstrokes are expressive and varied, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall effect is that of a layered, almost crystalline structure. The text 'PERRI NERI' is centered horizontally across the middle of the image in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

PERRI NERI

Perri Neri

New Paintings

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THE PAINTING CENTER

547 West 27th Street, Suite 500, New York, NY 10001
Tues-Sat, 11-6 pm, 212-343-1060, www.thepaintingcenter.org

Perri Neri: New Paintings

Perri Neri is known for her abstract figurative paintings and drawings, birthing shape, texture, and color while addressing questions of sexuality, identity, and memory. In 1977, after graduating high school, Perri was self-sufficient and ready to be on her own. She earned her living as a hairstylist while taking design classes in Community College. A self-taught painter, she learned by copying the works of Georgia O'Keefe, Frida Kahlo, Leonore Fini, Francis Bacon, and Lucien Freud. In 1986, she moved from her small Florida town of St. Petersburg to New York City and enrolled in a figure painting class at Parsons. It was in this class that she fell in love with oils and painting from the live model.

After a sexual assault, she moved back home to Florida and started producing an immense amount of work that took on a surrealist element and which addressed the very personal angst she was trying to manage. Beginning in 1992, she started exhibiting in arts centers, small galleries, and museum group exhibitions in the Tampa Bay area. While reading a biography of Michelangelo, Perri learned of a possible lineage to his mother, Francesca di Neri. This idea fascinated her. She started painting Michelangelo figures from the Sistine Chapel and did painting studies of the Medici Chapel sculptures. "The Michelangelo Project" was the vehicle that pushed Perri to develop a new way of

preparing her canvases, a less pristine treatment of surface by pressing magazine pages into wet gesso and peeling away after it dried. The resulting pentimento is a somewhat cryptic message from the media. It was during the Pratt years that Perri's work, rooted in figurative painting, became her own kind of figurative abstraction, a drama in strong contrasts rich in texture, color, motion, and expression.

Neri has labored, layered, scrubbed, and scratched her canvases to produce work that embraces figuration and celebrates the act of painting. Her paintings speak of the vulnerability and emotions, the struggle and joy in finding human connection, and the visceral experience of being human. Her approach to art making tackles the history of figurative painting and her own place as an artist. Some work is in direct response to particular paintings or themes in art history. Others are visual meditations on how it feels to move through this particular place in time.

Neri states: "My art is the only hard currency I can offer up in exchange for the deeply gratifying and deeply grotesque aspects of humanity I observe. I try to slow down the visions in my head, miscellany of predicaments and perversions, and record snatches of my private mind's conversation with oil paint on canvas."

Neri has always worked with an undercurrent of subtle political influence. This new body of work reflects the artist's own restlessness with a dominating power system that has survived generations of political protests and the fight for equality and social change.

Neri is pulled between rival aesthetic approaches—the power of a strong line and the drama of color. Graphite on newsprint, printed text, and images ripped out of magazines pushed into raw or prepped canvases often engage with the figure. This practice speaks to the multiplicity of fragmented information streaming constantly via social media and the news and entertainment business.

Neri comments: "As a figurative artist it is challenging to do something new, considering the whole of art history. I like looking at old master paintings by Michelangelo and Gentileschi, and contemporary painters such as Bacon and Saville. I have also learned a lot about the physical act of painting, the pace and tempo, by looking at abstract paintings. My work consists of tensions. Forms and figures move in and out of dimensions, breaking apart, unfolding on an emotional axis. These emotions stem from conflicts. I have questions. How is it that trauma can continue to stalk us long after we believe we have given it the slip? Why do women's achievements continue to be something for the patriarchy to conquer? How can an intentionally erased history be archived?"



Heartened, 2020, Oil and newsprint on linen, 40 x 40 inches

Slay, 2018, Oil and magazine pages on canvas, 60 x 72 inches



Counted, 2020, Oil, graphite, and newsprint on canvas, 80 x 60 inches



Pique, 2019, Oil on canvas, 80 x 60 inches



Submit, 2020, Oil and paper on canvas, 60 x 72 inches



Communion, 2020, Oil and paper on canvas, 80 x 60 inches



Target, 2020, Oil and paper on canvas, 60 x 60 inches



Drive, 2019, Oil and newsprint on canvas, 60 x 40 inches



Thread, 2020, Oil and magazine pages on canvas, 80 x 80 inches



Lap Dance, 2018, Oil and magazine pages on canvas, 28 x 18 inches



Perri Neri

Perri Neri received her MFA in Painting with Distinction from The Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. Neri has exhibited in solo and group shows throughout New York and Florida including Ceres Gallery in NYC, Caelum Gallery in NYC, A.I.R. Gallery in Brooklyn, Scarfone-Hartley Gallery in Tampa, and most recently, a retrospective of her work, Past-Tense; Present at The Morean Art Center in St Petersburg, Florida. This is Neri's first show at The Painting Center. Her work has been featured in two volumes of Studio Visit Magazine, and in a 2015 article, Women in Contemporary Art, Where are They Now?, in Honeysuckle Magazine. Neri's work is in collections throughout the United States and Europe.

www.perrineri.com

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kf5zkjUC6Qc>

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