

Gallery 4

January 21-
March 27
2007

Darrel Roberts: *Luscious*



Untitled (from the Construction Sites & Parks series)
2006
oil on canvas
30 x 40 x 2 inches

Hyde Park **ART**CENTER

5020 South Cornell Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60615 773.324.5520 www.hydeparkart.org

The Hyde Park Art Center is a not-for-profit organization that presents innovative exhibitions, primarily work by Chicago-area artists, and educational programs in the visual arts for children and adults of diverse backgrounds. The Center is funded in part by the Alphawood Foundation; The Chicago Community Trust; a City Arts III grant from the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and the Illinois Arts Council; the Illinois Humanities Council; the National Endowment for the Humanities; and the Illinois General Assembly; The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation; The Lucius and Eva Eastman Foundation; The Field Foundation of Illinois; Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; The Leo S. Guthman Fund; The Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; The Joyce Foundation; The Mayer & Morris Kaplan Family Foundation; Kraft Foods; The MacArthur Foundation; The MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; The National Endowment for the Arts; The Orbit Fund; The Playboy Foundation; Polk Bros. Foundation; The Clinton Family Fund; The Sara Lee Foundation; South East Chicago Commission; The Terra Foundation for American Art; and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; and the generosity of its members and friends.

The topography of Chicago is constantly reinvented with new municipal projects from Millennium Park and skyscrapers to road and sidewalk repairs. Darrell Roberts creates canvases that draw from the dynamic space around him. All of the works on view are from the most recent **Construction Sites and Parks** series made between 2004 and 2006. The artist has documented these shifts in the cityscape throughout the seasons with snapshots (as seen in the table of objects "to touch" in the gallery) that directly influence the compositions of his paintings. The thickly layered paint on Darrell's canvases recall the textures, colors, and sensations of traveling through and in this city.

According to Darrell, he is heavily influenced by the abstract painter Hans Hoffman (1880-1966) and he employs Hoffman's push-pull theory, which strives to make a flat surface appear as though it has a tension between foreground and background through color. Darrell's work also draws from other abstract expressionist art – art that combines emotional intensity and self-expression through colors, textures, and shapes instead of realistic renderings of a figure, object or place. Like many abstract expressionist artists, Darrell sees his painting as part of a process, not just a product. He paints with brushes, putty knives and palette knives and with paint that is often mixed with pumice for texture. He works on multiple canvases at a time moving between them with each stroke of paint. As much as he piles on paint layer after paint layer, he also scrapes away certain parts of the painted surface to uncover relationships between colors. Looking at his final pieces you can see his process of painting; it is part of the experience of his artworks.

Steeped in the tradition of oil painting, my paintings are best seen in multiples to get a sense of the sensory overload and rapid eye movement on a subject with the subtle changes. My paintings stimulate the viewer's senses... My life is art and molded around life.

While Darrell's paintings are abstract, he sees them as "residues" of his life and experiences. He collects materials from the city--colored papers, bright toys, photographs of construction sites-- in his studio. His paintings seem to collect colors and strokes in the same way. The layers and colors that accumulate on his canvases are like his documentation of the changes he sees in the city and his surroundings. As a result, the process of viewing his work becomes a process tempting multiple senses. Viewed together his abstract works are an exploration into the multi-faceted sensations of experiencing a place.



Untitled
2006
oil on canvas
18 x 18 x 1 inches



Image of source materials found in the artist's studio.

Darrell Roberts grew up in rural Iowa and received a BA at the University of Northern Iowa. He also received a BFA and MFA from the Art Institute of Chicago and is a returning faculty member at the Hyde Park Art Center. Darrell has taught painting and drawing at the School of the Art Institute, Hearst Center for the Arts, Marwen, and Lill Street Art Center. Since 1999, he has exhibited his paintings in public and private spaces in Chicago and the surrounding area as well as Los Angeles.

The title of the show **Luscious** refers to the painting's ability to evoke the senses and stimulate the desire to touch the canvases. However, to preserve the artwork, please do not touch the paintings. For this reason, the Art Center has included a table of objects found in the artist's studio that exemplify his curiosity for the tactile and vibrant found in the everyday experience.

Sarah Pesin
Exhibitions Assistant