

About the Artist:



Sheri Rush is a Chicago based painter whose practice includes photography and collage. She received a BFA in painting from Texas Christian University and a MFA in painting from the University of Chicago. Rush's work explores the ineradicable nature of memory and recollection, and the contemporary diminishing experience of the sublime, specifically the layers through which landscape is viewed. Rush has shown in Texas and throughout the Chicago area including the Hyde Park Art Center where she participated in the Center Program while in the Visual Arts Certificate Program at the University of Chicago Graham School Continuing Liberal and Professional Studies during 2014.

Exhibition Reception

Sunday, November 12

2:00 - 5:00 pm

Meet the artist and celebrate Sheri Rush: *Portals of Discovery* along with concurrent exhibitions.

The artworks on view are available for purchase through Hyde Park Art Center. Pricelists are located in a binder at the front desk. If interested, contact exhibitions@hydeparkart.org.

Hyde Park **ARTCENTER**

5020 South Cornell Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60615 773.324.5520 www.hydeparkart.org. Hyde Park Art Center is a unique resource that advances contemporary visual art in Chicago by connecting artists and communities in unexpected ways. The Art Center is funded in part by the: Alphawood Foundation; Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts; a City Arts III grant from the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events; Field Foundation of Illinois; Harpo Foundation; Harper Court Arts Council; Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; The Irving Harris Foundation; The Joyce Foundation; Leo S. Guthman Fund; Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; Polk Bros. Foundation; Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust; and the generosity of people like you.

Sheri Rush *Portals of Discovery*

Cleve E. Carney Gallery
October 15 - December 17, 2017



One in a Set of Imprints, 2017, acrylic paint, spray paint, and oil paint on canvas, 48 x 72 inches

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Portals of Discovery presents a new body of work by artist **Sheri Rush**, whose paintings explore the omnipresence of the digital image as a stand in for real experience. With the unrelenting stream of sharing in our day to day lives on social media, our memories become solidified not through personal remembrance but through a singular digital image. Through *Portals*, Rush invites us to unplug, keenly capturing a vague déjà vu through both her source imagery (photographs taken from a train) and the tactic of rotating her canvases, allowing gravity to repeatedly take hold of the paint stroke and echo through the layers created. Rush freezes a moment, and the viewer, from the endless cycle of consuming ubiquitous two dimensional bytes.



Darklands, 2016, acrylic paint oil paint and spray paint on canvas, 60 x 72 inches

no longer concerned with capturing the past and holding the psychological weight of those memories, she has freed herself to consider the future unknown.

The six paintings in *Portals of Discovery* retain aspects of this life-formed process. Traveling via train with three cameras, Rush captured fast moving landscapes from Nottingham to London, Scotland to Morocco. Moving away from any discernible landscape, Rush abstracts her journey into a sublime experience and focuses on the metaphysical aspects of the grandness of life at its core. The world around us will always be grander and more mysterious than we can conceive, despite our best efforts to digitize every event from the mundane to the grandiose.

As a painter, Rush acknowledges the history of the medium through her interest in the personal psyche, a key component explored by the Abstract Expressionists of the 50's and 60's in America. Citing artists like Joan Mitchell, who utilized abstraction to memorialize landscapes that had a distinct influence on her from the cities she lived in like Chicago and Paris. Indiscernible in nature, Mitchell seeks to capture the energy of the city, its essence through frenetic yet thoughtful gestures. Rush employs her full

Rush's interest in utilizing her personal photographs as source material in her paintings is not new, it is a process that began when she was living in Texas, capturing the many long car journeys to and from her family's farm. These persistent memories have shaped her work since she was a graduate student at the University of Chicago. It was upon entry to The Center Program at Hyde Park Art Center when a visiting curator encouraged her to release herself from not only the photograph as object, but the hold these photos had on her mentally. Rush ended up shredding her entire archive. A monumental shift for Rush psychologically, *Portals of Discovery* breaks free from these landscapes and into new territory,

body in the gestures present, manually taking down her unstretched canvas at every layer to rotate, drip, dry, consider, and turn over and over again. These 360 rotations create long periods of reflection for Rush, as she watches paint dry, percolating on the options and roads her compositions could take. Unperturbed by the ownership Gerhard Richter has over his squeegee technique to create haunting movement by smearing the faces and objects in old photographs slowly, Rush is more attuned to Pat Steir's method of pouring paint to visualize the white noise and repetitive motion of a waterfall. The canvases in *Portals* gallantly establish Rush's signature technique to render movement through transparent beams of thin white oil paint, while creating a vacuum of space for the viewer to enter.

This form, and these new paintings, asks us to look inward, to consider the self as Rush does when she mines her personal histories and experiences. How can a viewer, take a moment of reflection of their own history, as they enter into Rush's large scale compositions that take many pathways to creation, as we all must as we continue to grow. The canvases tower over the observer, claiming space quite literally and blowing open the hand held square of our phone camera. As Rush drips and pours her brightly colored paints, rotating the canvases upon every layer building depth through gravitational pull, she slices the jewel-toned streams with semi-transparent white parallelograms and creates brief windows for the viewer to rest their eyes before continuing onward.



Progress of the Opus, 2017, acrylic paint, spray paint, and oil paint on uncoated canvas, 84 x 116 inches

Painting movement and reflection through geometric shapes is a technique Rush employs which gives the effect of being the passenger in the backseat of a car, during twilight, as the driver zips past gridded street lights - a moment almost all viewers can access within themselves. The landscape is blurred, the light feels otherworldly, and in this moment, there is nothing to worry about. You are not the driver, nor do you need to worry about where you're going, the road will take you there. Rush is interested in this journey, and the mental shift that happens when one is given the space to let their mind wander. There is a certain melancholy present. Safety is guaranteed in this suspended reality but the terror of the larger world creeps around the edges of this memory. The accessibility of sharing this moment online or disrupting the view with an additional camera lens is a contemporary itch that she acknowledges and pushes past - Rush invites you into this Portal temporarily, to catch a breath.

Ariel Gentalen
Residency Coordinator at Hyde Park Art Center