

# **narrative**

# **abstractions**



**TAM SITS DOWN WITH LA BASED PAINTER DANI TULL**

## **What are your favorite recent trends in Southern California Contemporary Art?**

I'm pretty excited to see a return of "handmade" and analog media. In the age of rapid innovations in digital formats and AI, I think it's important to do and witness things made by hand. I am also enjoying the swing back toward abstraction with new forms and enquiries into abstraction in all media.



## **How does being a Southern California artist define you and your work?**

I'm sure being a southern California artist has a subconscious impact on my sense of color and light, but perhaps more importantly is that the lifestyle of living in Southern California has provided me with a strong relationship to nature.

## **Who is your favorite Southern California Artist of all time and why?**

I don't really have a favorite So Cal artist, but I admire and find inspiration from the maverick ethos of some of California art and cultural histories, the Beat and Funk artists and writers come to mind.

## **Please briefly explain your process?**

I think of my paintings as 'narrative abstraction', abstract compositions that appear to be subject to the forces of gravity -- the earth element that keeps us on the ground able to sustain and propagate life, or alternately, gravity makes things fall apart. The forms in my paintings lean, support, navigate the space and negotiate complex relationships with each other, much like organic lifeforms or even the dynamics of human interrelations. The compositions ultimately work towards what I think of as 'self-correcting forms' - always striving toward equilibrium while arching against collapse. Within my process, the white gesso-ed underpainting presents a tabula rasa (clean slate) upon which I inscribe the



surface with personal texts, poetry by various writers, as well as written contributions from friends and family members. These lettered layers are ultimately painted over, becoming

palimpsests as the texts are obscured by the final layer of paint. Through a generative process, a repetition of pinstripe lines are hand-painted and

accumulate into what I think of as “streams.” The color combinations chosen for the streams are derived from meaningful life experiences and suspended in these forms and on the surfaces of the paintings like trace artifacts. For example, within a single canvas, one stream of colors is derived from a recollection of an event I do not have a photograph of, or the colors of my late grandfather’s vintage flannel shirt, others are the colors of my daughter’s hair. Some color palettes are borrowed from other artwork: the color palette from a landscape painting by my mother or colors from my own previous bodies of work. These meaningful life experiences offer source material while embedding the abstractions with inherent sentimental narrative



Dani Tull

Photograph Courtesy of the Artist