

Benjamin Terry: Artist Statement

In the weeks before arriving in Corsicana, I inadvertently stumbled upon the spray painted gradient:

[To be clear, gradients and airbrushed paintings have been a trend running rampant in painting for what seems like much too long now. Like the drip or the impasto brush stroke, it's a seductive little painting trope. It's just too damn slick and sexy to be ignored. So naturally, I've avoided it's enticing song for fear of being devoured by the siren.

I find comfort in awkwardness. Frumpy, clunky, shapes. Lines that meander. Color that either screams at you, or hides quietly in the corner. A true reflection of my personality.]

One day, while testing out a new can of spray paint, I softly laid in a transition from the deep, muted wine color I had just purchased, into a scrap of saturated blue plywood. I immediately felt the joy of that fluffy spray painted edge, countered by the hard, janky edge of the plywood. I was hooked. The baggage of this played out trope was no longer a concern of mine.

I stepped into the 100w studio for the first time a changed man. A new tool at my disposal. Thoughts of Rothko and Frankenthaler filled my mind as I gained a new appreciation for their edge play. The weeks that have transpired since my arrival have been exciting and chaotic. A mix of quick, intuitive decisions, and slow, thoughtfully considered marks. A new sense of unknowing intertwined with materials and painting moves that have become very familiar. With every painting I have made here, I've learned something new about color, edges, space, and composition. I made some bad paintings. And I've made some good ones. But the time and space at 100 West Corsicana, allowed me to navigate this new tool with an energy and conviction I wouldn't have been able to in my regular studio space and schedule. For this I am truly grateful.