

Where the Stress Falls
Ezra Tessler
9.16-11.11.2023

A.D.NYC is pleased to present *Where the Stress Falls*, an exhibition of new works by Ezra Tessler.

Tessler's newest body of work explores the possibilities inherent in the figure-ground relationship. The ground in painting is typically the material support or the field of action. The figure is the person or thing that acts in or on that field. But in these abstract, three-dimensional paintings with their saturated colors, jumpy patterns and mercurial shapes, grounds become figures and figures become grounds.

The works in the exhibition are assembled with wire and string, covered in aqua resin, wrapped in paper pulp, pressed, printed, erased, sawed apart, Frankensteined back together, painted, cut, repaired, and rewrapped. Paper pulp plays its own capricious role in this process as it gets poured and pigmented, stretching and contorting as it dries.

In his studio, Tessler figures his way through material – material first, always – and grounds his work in the discomfort of tinkering and the pleasure of discovering. Striped paths of vivid colors splice celestial fields and blobs sit on blobs, telescoping new spaces in and out. Almost every piece features two kinds of figure and two kinds of ground, each constituting and subverting the other. For Tessler, doubling helps reveal subtle accents and the contours of likeness and difference.

These material events wrestle with pressing problems. For instance: what's the relationship between the messy stuff that goes on inside our own heads and how we live together in spite of – or perhaps because of – our individuality? Working out the dynamics between figure and ground approaches this question. It's an absurd task for wire, paper, and pigment, made even more so by the world at hand. A syrupy pink encircles a dark red, a wilting shape dangles over a stammering line. These are tangible, albeit awkward, proposals.

Ezra Tessler lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Recent solo presentations include *Small Cottage* at Hudson House (Hudson, NY), *An angle to the place I live in* at Tops Gallery (Memphis, TN), and *Recent Work with Good Weather* at MECA (San Juan, PR). His work has been included in group shows at The Green Gallery (Milwaukee, WI), The Landing (Los Angeles, CA), and Jack Barrett Gallery (New York, NY), among others. He is the recipient of a Jacob Javits Fellowship, a Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant, a Pforzheimer Foundation Fellowship, and has been an artist-in-residence at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, the Elizabeth Murray Foundation, Ox-Bow, and the Workspace Program at Dieu Donn .