

TURNER CARROLL

Greg Murr

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

nature / the usual politics/blooms | 2008 - present

I'm fascinated by the notion that so much of the observable world exists outside our scope of everyday awareness yet remains within the limits of our sense perception. At any given moment, phenomena are at play all around us, shaping our surroundings and the parameters of our existence, whether acknowledged, presumed or missed altogether. Physical laws, fluid dynamics, patterns of growth in nature, and even the sociological and economic models that govern our lives—together, such frameworks define our reality. I make artwork to look at the aesthetics and implications of these unseen structures shaping our consciousness and providing us a means of navigating our environment, often without our recognition.

In 2008, I began making pictures of dogs with their noses to the ground, relying upon instincts to guide them. Depicted among tangled pearls or fashion's latest high heels, the dogs find themselves amidst a material elite's accoutrements. The recontextualization endows them with a peculiar new level of cognizance; they now fulfill the role of surrogate humanity, ever reminding us of the animal beings that we are. Here, our extravagances and luxury goods may paradoxically illuminate the animal essence we have for so long aspired to transcend. In what ways do we pronounce our mastery over primary needs, or the fundamental issues of survival and security? And how shall we define ourselves and make meaning of our lives, apart from invoking a host of consumer products, brands and services? What exactly is our genuine behavior? In response to such questions, these pictures challenge us to evaluate human nature as animal, and encourage us to think further about the motivations guiding us in all that we do.

More recently, I have been examining some of the fundamental properties of our world: space, time, matter, and motion using familiar resources from nature. These paintings feature arrangements of delicate peony blossoms that allure in their recognizability, but also insinuate a certain spatial fabric and a presence of gravity with their networks of lines, folds and masses. Rendered in layers of nearly transparent paint, the exquisite blooms are depictions of both levity and weight, of motion and stillness, of growth and collapse. These allusions to motion, vitality, transcendence and ephemeral physical existence embody them with substance beyond their identity as flora.