



THIS PAGE: "SLIPPERY INSTALL 4," (2012). COURTESY THE ARTIST AND THE HOLE, NEW YORK.

OPPOSITE: "FPO PAINTING IN COLLABORATION WITH MARTINE SYMS," (2012), 30 X 22 INCHES. COURTESY THE ARTIST AND THE HOLE, NEW YORK.



SAYRE GOMEZ

WRITTEN BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT

Sayre Gomez has no boundaries—at least not when it comes to art. His versatile and recombinant uses of media, materials, and genres from collage to painting, drawing, sculpture, installation, found objects, reproduced images, and all the permutations in between exist within a “conceptual framework of complete flexibility. I want to have a practice that is limitless. I’m not so interested in what an artwork means, but rather how it means.”

Originally from Chicago, Gomez attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago before heading for postgraduate studies at CalArts, and never left LA; and in many ways, the story of that education is still very much in play. “SAIC is a much bigger school, and the faculty is older, more rooted in formalism; whereas CalArts doesn’t even divide the disciplines. There aren’t any painting ‘classes,’ only critiques. The CalArts model is completely conceptual. Formal concerns are seen merely as conduits to articulate ideas. I’m always looking for ways to collapse these kinds of contradictions.”

Gomez frequently explores the role architecture plays when viewers encounter objects and construct meaning in context. With a taste for painting gallery rooms in saturated, emotionally affecting colors, or obscuring central images in layers of abstract gesture and deconstruction, Gomez has worked in sculpture, installation, painting, video, assemblage, and combinations thereof, moving between ideas and visual lexicons with capricious sure-footedness and reliance on intuition. However there are some powerful recurring motifs as well—such as windows, both as objects and metaphors. “I saw some really beautiful windows [as I exited] the highway one day, and I noticed that the tinting film used to make them opaque was falling apart and you could see through in parts. Looking at them as abstract paintings, I realized that they’re perfect for me. They’re pictorial and fit into a history of illusion and representation, and at the same time they reference the readymade, all while re-enforcing my interest in how framing informs perception.”

He takes a similar approach to his highway-ramp epiphany with text and found images, trawling Facebook or Tumblr for pictures that appeal aesthetically and speak to our new composite, very public way of constructing identity. “Images exist as abstractions to me; and I tend to use pictures that dodge legibility and are themselves difficult to read, as a way of challenging viewers’ expectations.” He favors English translations of Lorem Ipsum, the algorithmic dummy text used as surrogates before designers receive actual content. “If you translate it to English you get really bizarre word combinations. So the text I use functions very similarly to the images—you can read them, but you’re not quite sure what they’re saying.”

His search for materials goes global in 2013, as he wraps up a show at NYC’s The Hole and looks to group shows in the Spring in London’s Paradise Row and Spain’s Mallorca Landings. In Summer, he’ll co-organize a group show at LA’s Night Gallery, then it’s back to his home base with a new body of work with François Ghebaly in Culver City in the Fall.