

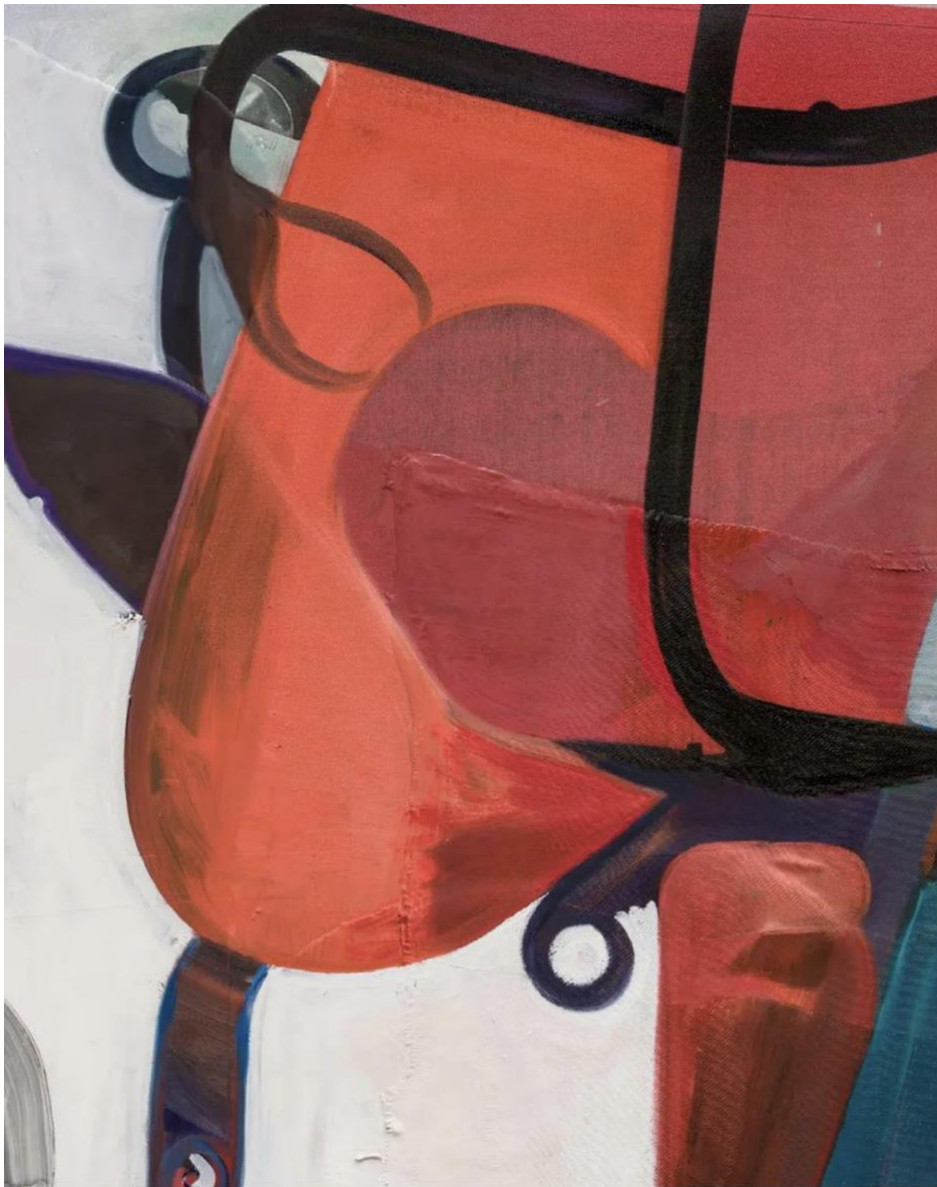


Alex Hubbard: Re-integrating the deconstructed moving images of the painting process back into painting



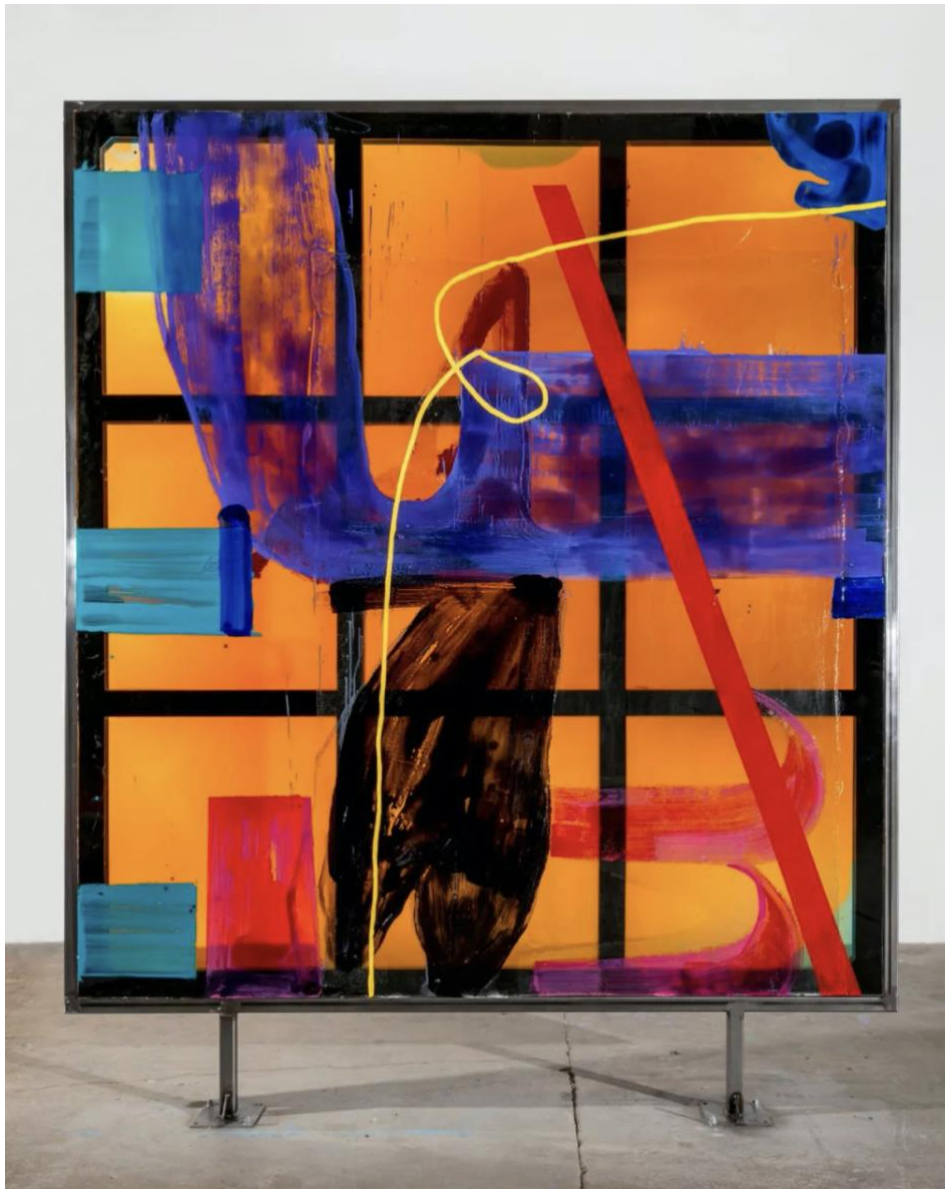
Proof of Receipt, 2020, Acrylic, urethane, epoxy resin, fiberglass and oil on canvas, 127 x 111.8 x 5.1 cm, Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery

After graduating from Lewis & Clark College and Pacific Northwest College of Art in the late 1990s with a bachelor's degree, Alex Hubbard (b.1975), an American artist now living in Los Angeles, enrolled in the Whitney Museum's Independent Study Program in the early 2000s. His work encompasses video art and painting, exploring the possibilities of visual expressions through the overlap and translations between the two mediums. Hubbard's emphasis on painted image is made apparent in some of his video works such as, *Eat Your Friends* (2012) and *Bottom of the Top* (2012), in which he reproduced the painting process in a deconstructivist manner. After that, his moving images' visual elements are further incorporated into his painting, affording a sense of fluidity to the painted surface.



Proof of Receipt, 2020 (Detail), Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery

Hubbard's paintings often bring together abstraction language with non-traditional industrial materials such as resin, fiberglass, tinted polyurethane, and car paint, suggesting a mechanical mode of production. Usually, the artist attaches ready-made objects to the canvas as a response to contemporary everyday life. Hubbard pours, pulls, and drips a mixture of these industrial materials onto the canvas, creating large, bright blocks of color with a sense of transparency, thereby building his unique abstract visual form. The uncontrollable chemical reactions between the different materials bring a certain arbitrary quality to Hubbard's paintings, which derives from the medium's autonomy and dynamism. In Hubbard's words, the changes that occur with the material variations "make the paintings seem like self-producing painting machines."



To be titled, 2015, Courtesy of the artist and Maccarone, Los Angeles

Everyday objects are common subjects in Hubbard's videos and paintings, and through careful layout and arrangement, they embody living beings with individual autonomous consciousness. Influenced by the Swiss artist duo Peter Fischli and David Weiss and earlier periods of Dada, Fluxus, and Conceptual art, including Marcel Duchamp and Dieter Roth, Hubbard makes gestures that allow the objects to interact with one another. In making the video, and then through post-editing and voiceover, the artist eventually creates a sitcom-like scene. His painting process is not necessarily pre-planned, as in the unexpected components of *Heads in the Dark* (2009), where he allows various media to collide and merge. Still, Hubbard is willing to confront the sense of movement and the problems that come with the unexpected, or the autonomy of objects and materials, through which he discovers the joy of creativity.



Heads in the Dark, 2009, still from a color video, 19 minutes 10 seconds

Alex Hubbard's most solo exhibition at Simon Lee Gallery in Hong Kong presents a selection of the artist's latest paintings, whose process extends to adopting UV printing techniques. Taking mechanical reproduced prints and everyday objects as substrates, Hubbard emphasizes the physical properties of the objects, their energy and perceptual capacity, and to some extent, a deconstruction and reshaping of the painted surface. Hubbard's work revolves around deconstruction and reshaping, through which he re-accepts the challenge of differences through each new action. While the artist fosters a visual aesthetic, he also generates "pure feelings" in the artwork. Here, we connect with Hubbard from California and ask him to talk about his work approach and evolution from a practical perspective.



展览现场：亚历克斯·哈伯德，摄影@Tai Ngai Lung

Q&A

Artshard x Alex Hubbard

Q:

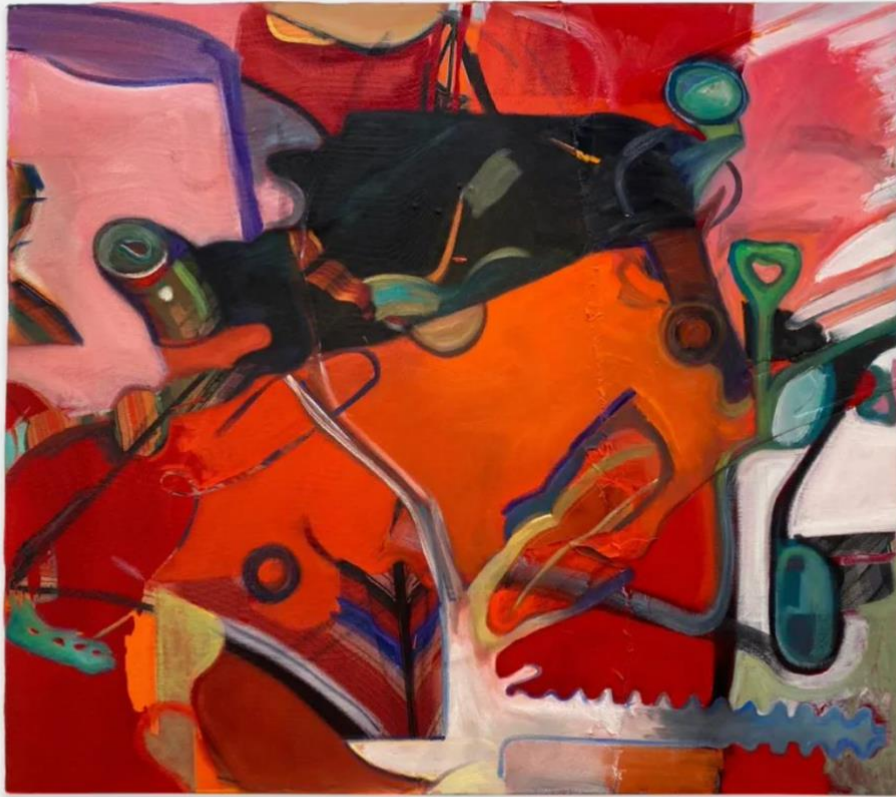
You have been practicing both painting and video works, which comes first to you?

Alex Hubbard:

It's really back and forth between the two practices. They inform one another. The videos were the first artworks I created that I felt had their own voice, it was the first time I worked in an actual series. Initially, the paintings were a way to incorporate what I had figured out through the videos into another medium. It became a balance, keeping the two practices related but not too close. I've never been that interested when I see objects taken directly out of a video and sold like a souvenir. I've made videos and paintings that were so closely related they seemed to homogenize one another, and other times the relationship was frenetic and transmutation together.



Installation View: Hammer Projects: Alex Hubbard, The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA, 2012, Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery



Umbrella, 2020, Acrylic, urethane, epoxy resin, fiberglass oil on canvas, 111.8 x 127 x 5.1 cm, Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery

Q:

Your videos seem to record and present the making process and movement of your paintings, do you consider the videos an extension of the paintings? Or how do you see the relationship between the two?

Alex Hubbard:

Again they feed off one another but I feel they need to be independent practices, the paintings need to stand on their own. In a very practical sense it's nice to switch from making videos to making paintings and vice versa. I love to do the editing and sound work on the videos, the planning and preparation can be drudgery. Then the opposite is true of painting which can be a very enjoyable way to spend time. It can be torture as well, but that's part of it.



Eat Your Friends, 2012, Digital video, color sound, 5:39 Edition 3 of 5 (+1AP), Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery

Q:

Fields of bold color are often applied in your paintings; can you discuss your choice of color?

Alex Hubbard:

A lot of the color choices are determined by the materials, the urethanes and resins I use are transparent and tinctable. Working with several layers of translucent medium the first color I use determines how the following layer or layers will behave.

The depth and geography created through the layering of materials is important to me. The negative spaces are as important as whatever is being painted or painted out.



Untitled, 2020, Acrylic, urethane, fiberglass oil on wood, 33 x 41.9 x 4.4 cm, Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery



Untitled, 2020, Acrylic, urethane, epoxy resin, fiberglass oil on canvas 203.2 x 182.9 x 4.4 cm, Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery



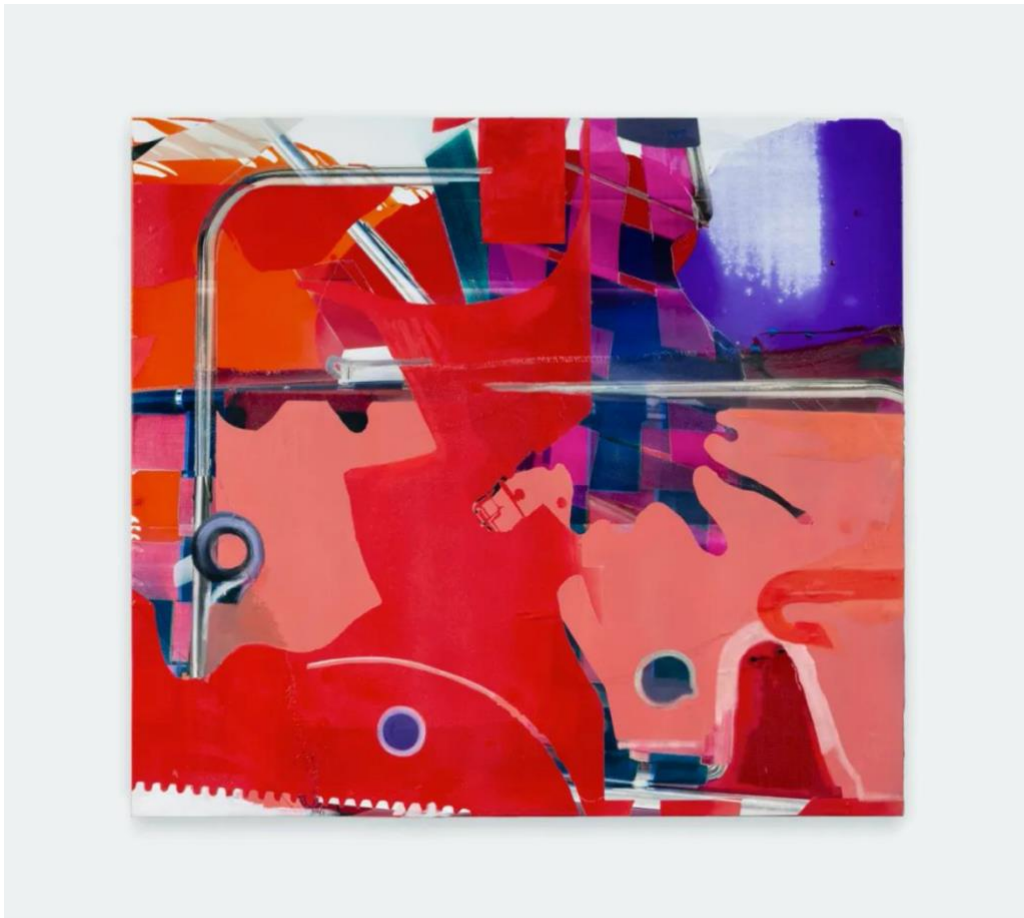
Untitled, 2020 (Detail), Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery

Q:

What is the role of found objects in your work?

Alex Hubbard:

In the recent bodies of paintings the objects I pick are related to the materials and mechanical generation of making the painting. With the paintings in Hong Kong at Simon Lee I wanted the paintings to somehow look mechanical, as if they had painted themselves into being, or that the painting was about to start like a crazy machine. There are futurist paintings of Picabia, Duchamp and Italian Futurists. We are in such a different relationship to the machine and the body now but for me with the accumulation of industrial techniques I'm using this made sense.



You're a thing, 2020, Acrylic, urethane, epoxy resin, fiberglass oil on canvas, 147.3 x 162.6 x 5.1 cm, Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery

Q:

You tend to involve spraying and pouring technique to achieve abstract compositions and industrial materials such as fiberglass, epoxy resin to create a sense of mechanism; can you talk about how the techniques and media have evolved throughout your practice?

Alex Hubbard:

I was introduced to fiberglass and resin doing boat repair. The urethane from sculptures in which I was casting three dimensional replicas of my own work. Those replicas would be heated up and bent into sculpture. That material can be supersaturated with pigments or transparent so I began to use the materials together as paint and against paint. The other chemistry and materials then developed out of necessity of working with plastics. There are paints that work beautifully on plastics and paints that fall off or cause unintended chemical reactions and problems.



Untitled, 2011, Acrylic, resin and fiberglass on canvas, 200 x 177 cm, Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery

The recent paintings have evolved from the mechanical and industrial to printing and painting imagery of objects that may have produced these paintings. I want these paintings to look as painting machines that could have made themselves.



Untitled, 2020, Acrylic, urethane, epoxy resin, fiberglass oil on canvas, 147.3 x 162.6 x 5.1 cm, Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery

I'm painting in structural supports, buckets, ropes, straps. The videos I made were a series of industrial acts, painting, pouring and destruction of objects. There was always an order and meaning that developed out of the chosen objects. Things that related to the creation and destruction of the visual plane of the videos, as well as art historical references. I'm always scanning for objects, looking for something that would add energy or chaos or harmony to the pictures. A few of the objects in this show are broken umbrellas. Kind of a slapstick object .



Installation View: Alex Hubbard: Projectors, Gaga & Reena Spaulings, Los Angeles, CA, 2019

Q:

What are you planning for your first solo in China? How would it differ from your other solo exhibitions in general?

Alex Hubbard:

This show is all due to Covid, the eerie quiet of everything. It allowed me to work unencumbered by anything which is so different. There was no one to look as I painted, no visits, no assistants, no plans just quiet.



Untitled, 2020, Acrylic, urethane, epoxy resin, fiberglass and oil on canvas, 147.3 x 162.6 x 5.1 cm, Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery