

PETER BLUM GALLERY

ENOC PEREZ

ENOC PEREZ

Born 1967 San Juan, Puerto Rico
Lives and works in New York, NY

EDUCATION

1992 M.F.A., Hunter College, New York, NY
1990 B.F.A., Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2019 *Enoc Perez: The Cinematic Self*, Ben Brown Fine Arts, London, UK
Enoc Perez: The Idea of Us, Gavlak Gallery, Palm Beach, FL
- 2018 *Enoc Perez: Liberty & Restraint*, Dallas Contemporary, Dallas, TX
- 2017 *Casitas*, Brand New Gallery, Milan, Italy
Enoc Perez: Nudes, Harper's Books, East Hampton, NY
Embassies, UTA Artist Space, Los Angeles, CA
- 2015 *Digs*, Koenig & Clinton, New York, NY
Lipstick, The Philip Johnson Glass House, New Canaan, CT
One World Trade Center, Peter Blum Gallery, New York, NY
Recent Paintings, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris, France
Cut-Outs, Danziger Gallery, New York, NY
- 2014 *Summer Jobs*, Harper's Books, East Hampton, NY
New Work, Thomas Ammann Fine Arts AG, Zürich, Switzerland
Paintings, Le Royal Monceau, Paris, France
- 2013 *Paris Mon Amour*, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris, France
The Good Days, Acquavella Galleries, New York, NY
- 2012 *Utopia*, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
- 2011 *Works on paper*, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Brussels, Belgium
Nudes, Faggionato Fine Arts, London, UK
- 2010 Acquavella Galleries, New York, NY
Monochromes, Galerie Michael Janssen, Berlin, Germany
- 2009 *Enoc Perez*, Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York, NY
- 2008 *Tender*, Galerie Michael Janssen, Berlin, Germany
Casa Malaparte, Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy
Suite 720, Faggionato Fine Arts, London, UK
- 2007 Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, Miami, FL
Lever House Lobby Gallery, New York, NY
Faraway, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris, France
- 2006 *New York*, Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York, NY
Works on Paper, Faggionato, New York, NY
The United Nations, New York, Mario Diacono at ARS LIBRI, Boston, MA
- 2005 *Deluxe*, Faggionato, London, UK
- 2004 *Caribe Club*, The Happy Lion, Los Angeles, CA
The Party, Sammlung Sander, Berlin, Germany
Works on Paper, Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York, NY

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- 2003 *Monuments*, Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York, NY
2002 *Holiday*, Kunstverein Heilbronn, Heilbronn, Germany
New Work, Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York, NY
Enoc Perez, Dee / Glasoe, New York, NY
2001 *The Secret*, Galerie Michael Janssen, Cologne, Germany
1999 *Winter*, Bronwyn Keenan Gallery, New York, NY
Daydreaming, Turner & Runyon, Dallas, TX
1998 *A Year Without Love*, two-person exhibition with Jeremy Blake, Bronwyn Keenan Gallery,
New York, NY
1993 *White Columns*, New York
Galeria Uno, Caracas, Venezuela

TWO PERSON EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 *Enoc Perez & Carlos Rolón/Dzine*, Chimento Fine Arts, Los Angeles, CA
Casitas, Roberto Paradise, San Juan, Puerto Rico
1998 *A Year Without Love*, two-person exhibition with Jeremy Blake: Silver Hill, Bronwyn Keenan
Gallery, New York, NY

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2019 *Inaugural Exhibition*, Gavlak Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
HAPPY!, NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Jorge Pardo, Enoc Perez & Urs Fischer: Summer Installation, Lever House Art Collection, New
York, NY
Rehang, Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy
2017 *There is Still Good in This World*, Tripoli Gallery, Southampton, New York
Love Isabela: A Puerto Rico Fundraiser, Tripoli Gallery, Southampton, New York
this time, this place, Chrome Hearts Miami, Miami, FL
After the Fall, Peter Blum Gallery, New York, NY
Three Positions, König Galerie, Berlin, Germany
Garden Party, Brintz Galleries, Palm Beach, FL
Lob des Schattens, Marc Straus Gallery, New York, NY
2015 *Exquisite Corpse*, Planthouse Gallery, New York, NY
No Place Like Home, BYU Museum of Art, Provo, UT
Dimensions Variables, Pavillon de l'Arsenal, Paris, France
Metropolis, Edward Tyler Nahem Fine Art, New York, NY
2013 *City Self*, MICA, Chicago, IL
POP: Politics of Place, AD&A Museum, Santa Barbara, CA
2012 *Painting as a Radical Form*, Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy
In Between, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Brussels, Belgium
Skyscraper: Art and Architecture Against Gravity, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL
Spring Fever, Tony Shafrazi Gallery, New York, NY
New Prints 2012, International Print Center, New York, NY
Caribbean: Crossroads of the World, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY; Queens
Museum of Art, New York, NY; El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY

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- Jorge Pardo / Enoc Perez*, Joan Prats Art Grafic, Barcelona, Spain
- 2011 *Painting...Expanded*, Espacio 1414, Berezdivin Collection, San Juan, Puerto Rico
- 2010 *Portraits*, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Brussels, Belgium
Meet Me Inside, Gagosian Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
Best of, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Brussels, Belgium
- 2009 *Transitions: Painting at the (Other) End of Art*, Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy
Works on Paper, Faggionato Fine Arts, London, UK
- 2008 *Painting the Glass House*, Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT
- 2007 *Timer 01/Intimacy*, Triennale Bovisa, Milan, Italy
NeoIntegrity, Derek Eller Gallery, New York, NY
Blood Meridian, Galerie Michael Janssen, Berlin, Germany
Small Format, Faggionato Fine Arts, London, UK
- 2006 Perry Rubenstein, New York, NY
- 2005 Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York, NY
10 Years! Galerie Michael Janssen, Galerie Michael Janssen, Cologne, Germany
Ciano Manhattan, Perugi Arte Contemporanea, Padova, Italy
- 2004 *The Undiscovered Country*, UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA
None of the Above: Contemporary Work by Puerto Rican Artists, Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT;
Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, San Juan, Puerto Rico
Looking at Painting 2, Galerie Tanit, Munich, Germany
- 2003 *hands up, baby, hands up*, Oldburger Kunstverein, Oldenburg, Germany
Environs, Feigen Contemporary, New York, NY
Preview 2003, The Happy Lion, Los Angeles, CA
- 2002-3 *"Dear Painter, paint me..."Painting the Figure since late Picabia*, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France;
Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, Austria; Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Germany
- 2001 *Art in Puerto Rico through the Ages*, Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, San Juan, Puerto Rico
Boomerang: Collector's Choice, Exit Art, New York, NY
- 2000 *Two by Two for AIDS and Art*, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX
1900-2000: Paintings from a Misshapen Century, Kelowna Art Gallery, Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada
Annual Benefit Exhibition, White Columns, New York, NY
- 1999 *At Century's End*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Lake Worth, FL
Fresh Flowers: Floral Imagery in Contemporary Art, Bellevue Art Museum, Bellevue, WA
The S-Files: The Selected Files, El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY
- 1998 *Encyclopedia 1999*, Turner & Runyon, Dallas, TX
Message to Pretty, Thread Waxing Space, New York, NY
Home & Away, Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York, NY
- 1997 *Road Show '97*, Bronwyn Keenan Gallery, New York, NY
- 1996 *The Most Important Thing in the World: Oasis vs. Blur & Artists Who Rock*, The Art Exchange Show, New York, NY
V Bienal Internacional de Pintura, Cuenca, Ecuador
- 1995 *Annual Benefit Exhibition*, White Columns, New York, NY
- 1994 *Quinta Bienal de la Habana*, Havana, Cuba

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- 1993 *Update 1993*, White Columns, New York, NY
Venezuela Invitational Show, Sala Alternativa Galeria de Arte, Caracas, Venezuela
Pequenos Formatos, Luigi Marrozzini Gallery, San Juan, Puerto Rico

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2019 Labayen, Evalena. "Artist Enoc Perez Walks Us Through the Hotel Rooms of Rockstars", *Interview*, October 8, 2019
- 2018 Dalati, Sammy. "Enoc Perez takes Philip Johnson to the canvas in Dallas", *Modern Magazine* (online), February 27, 2018
Knecht, Lyndsay. "Things To Do In Dallas This Week: Feb. 19 – 22", *D Magazine* (online), February 19, 2018
"Perez Paints Johnson's Dallas", *Patron Magazine* (online), February/March 2018
Volner, Ian. "Enoc Perez Explores Philip Johnson's Architecture—and How it Relates to the Trump Era", *Architectural Digest* (online), January 22, 2018
Gempel, Natalie. "Dallas' Best Buildings Get Love From a Powerhouse Artist", *PaperCity Magazine* (online), January 12, 2018
- 2017 Binlot, Ann. "Canvassing the globe, artist Enoc Perez finds sanctuary in American embassies for a new show", *Wallpaper* Magazine*, May 15, New York, NY
Walsh, Brienne. "Sanctuaries or Security Bunkers? The Artist Enoc Perez Paints American Embassies", *Forbes*, May 10, New York, NY
Miller, Meg. "What The Architecture Of U.S. Embassies Tells Us About America", *Co.Design*, New York, NY
Gómez, Edward. "At the 2017 Dallas Art Fair, Big Ambitions and the Big Mo," *Hyperallergic*, April 8, New York, NY
"Peter Blum Gallery to Showcase Enoc Perez Paintings at Frieze New York 2017," *Blouin Art Info*, April, New York, NY
- 2016 Barrie, Lita. "Critic's Pick: The Power of Intimacy in Enoc Perez' and Carlos Rolon/Dzine's Collaboration at Chimento Contemporary," *Huffington Post*, December, New York, NY
Geyer, Christina. "In Conversation: Michael Craig-Martin and Enoc Perez," *Paper City Magazine*, April, Dallas, TX
Mendoza, Monica. "Here's a look at the new lobby, art inside Denver's Wells Fargo Center," *Denver Business Journal*, June, Denver, CO
Doroshenko, Peter. "Building as Metaphor," *Patron Magazine*, December, Dallas, TX
- 2015 Gendall, John. "Enoc Perez interprets Philip Johnson's Lipstick Building for the Glass House," *Wallpaper* Magazine*, November, UK
Wolin, Joseph R. "Enoc Perez," *Time Out New York*, October, New York, NY
Trucco, Terry. "Towering Hues," *IN New York Magazine*, Vol.15, No.10, October, New York, NY
Ebony, David. "David Ebony's Top 10 New York Gallery Shows for October," *artnet*, October, New York, NY
Travers, Alex. "Seven Art Shows To See This Fall," *Quest Magazine*, October, New York, NY
Mendel, Sacha. "Artist Interview: Enoc Perez," *Huffpost Arts and Culture*, September, New York, NY

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- Robinson, Walter. "Critic Walter Robinson on 9/11 Art and Moving Past Schmaltz," *New York Observer*, September, New York, NY
- Forrest, Nicholas. "Enoc Perez's Instagram Picassos at Galerie Nathalie Obadia," *Blouin Art Info*, June 15, UK
- Moss, Hilary. "At Danziger Gallery, a Pair of Artists United by Playing With Abstraction," *T Magazine*, May, New York, NY
- Bates, Rebecca. "8 Firsts with Enoc Perez," *Paddle8 First 8*, January, New York, NY
- 2014 Landes, Jennifer. "Enoc Perez's 'Summer Job,'" *The East Hampton Star*, August, New York, NY
- Browne, Alix. "Gilles Mendel + Enoc Perez," *W Magazine*, December, New York, NY
- Codinha, Alessandra. "J.Mendel/Spring 2015 RTW," *Vogue*, September, New York, NY
- Sherman, Lauren. "J.Mendel/Spring 2015 RTW," *Style Magazine*, September, New York, NY
- 2013 Byrnes, Mark. "Enoc Perez: The Andy Warhol of Architecture," *Dwell*, January
- Boucher, Brian. "Enoc Perez in 3D," *Art in America*, January, New York, NY
- "Enoc Perez 'The Good Days' at Acquavella Galleries, Through February 9th, 2013," *Art Observed*, January, New York, NY
- Kazakina, Katya / Rosboch, Lili. "Faded Hotels, Swizzle Sticks, Gilbert & George: Hot Art," *Bloomberg*, February, New York, NY
- Corbett, Rachel. "Enoc Perez Previews His New Picasso-Inspired Series," *Art Space Online*, August, New York, NY
- Wallis, Stephen. "Painter Enoc Perez's Last Work," *Architectural Digest*, November, New York, NY
- 2010 "The Rule Breaker: Enoc Perez Picks Up a Paintbrush," *Modern Painters*, Summer, New York, NY
- Johnson, Brandon. "INTERVIEW: Enoc Perez," *Zingmagazine*, May, New York, NY
- 2009 Sheets, Hilarie. "Enoc Perez at Mitchell-Innes & Nash," *artcritical*, September, New York, NY
- Pollack, Barbara. "Enoc Perez," *Time Out New York*, September, New York, NY
- 2008 Coggins, David. "Enoc Perez," *Interview Magazine*, December, New York, NY

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY

Museum of Contemporary Art, San Juan, Puerto Rico

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY

Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, FL

British Museum, London, UK

Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

New York Public Library, New York, NY

Vera List Center, New School, New York, NY

Richmond Center for Visual Arts, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI

Picker Art Gallery, Colgate University, Hamilton, NY

Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT

RISD Museum of Art, Providence, RI

Art, Design and Architecture Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA

University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, CA

Queens Museum of Art, New York, NY

PETER BLUM GALLERY

University Museum of Contemporary Art, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
William College Museum of Art, Williamstown, MA
Hammer Museum, University of California, Los Angeles, CA
The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY
Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA
Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia, PA
Tang Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY

Interview

ARTIST ENOC PEREZ WALKS US THROUGH THE HOTEL ROOMS OF ROCKSTARS

By Evalena Labayen
Published October 8, 2019



Artist Enoc Perez. Photo by Frederick Egan Castleberry. Courtesy of the artist and Ben Brown Fine Arts.

There was once a time when the lifestyles of the rich and famous were a delicious mystery, and their exclusivity drew us in closer in an attempt to peek behind the curtain. The Puerto Rican artist Enoc Perez pulls up those blinds in his new exhibit, *The Cinematic Self*, which runs from October 2 through November 22 at the Ben Brown Fine Arts gallery in London. In *The Cinematic Self*, Perez gives a nod to the figures who have influenced him throughout his life by opening a gateway into their lives, and homes, with his paintings. The exhibition humanizes these larger-than-life figures, allowing the viewer to leisurely examine Andy Warhol's medicine cabinet, or rifle through the books on Mick Jagger's mantel, unimpeded by their presence. Perez's subjects include rock stars like Elvis Presley, industry tycoons like Nelson Rockefeller, and fellow artists like Charles Jeanneret-Gris (a.k.a. Le Corbusier).

Where his previous works focused on exteriors, *The Cinematic Self* furthers his tradition of imagining beautiful spaces usually filled with people rendered completely empty. "I made these beautiful

paintings of these modernist buildings,” Perez told *Interview*. “A lot of those buildings today are in ruins. They’re abandoned. That was the utopia I was painting 25 years ago.” His art is continually drawn towards symbols of greatness, from soaring skyscrapers like the Freedom Tower in New York and Marina Towers in Chicago, to a timeless bottle of Puerto Rican rum, in “31.” With *The Cinematic Self*, these symbols are not just of one object, but of an entire environment that was once loved and lived in, where suddenly a simple office space or a bathroom’s wallpaper have significance. When asked why he wouldn’t add his own studio to the roster of rooms preserved by his brush, he said, “I’d rather see the space of Sigmund Freud or somebody interesting. Why would anybody want to look at my space?” Below, the artist gives us a tour of some of the interiors he’s painted, including David Bowie’s sleeping car in Siberia, Nelson Rockefeller’s apartment, and Fred Hughes’s office inside Andy Warhol’s Factory.

“FRED HUGHES’S FACTORY OFFICE, 22ND EAST 33RD ST, NEW YORK”



“You know what’s interesting? I arrived in New York in 1986, so I was 19. I went to see the shows that they were doing at the time. That’s what brought me to the city, painters like [Andy] Warhol, like [Jean-Michel Basquiat](#). The oil paints that I use are oil sticks, because when I was young, I was trying to make my own little Jean-Michels at age 19. I have met throughout the years, and count among my friends, a lot of the people that were around Warhol, that were friends with him and that knew him well. Collectors, artists, dealers. In that way, I’m very fortunate, and I’m very close to people that worked close with Jean-Michel Basquiat as well. I remember reading about all these people in *The Andy Warhol Diaries*, and these people are now real in my life. But I never met the artist.”

“STUDIO OF FRANCIS BACON, 7 REECE MEWS KENSINGTON, LONDON”



“The spaces—the fact that some are messy and kind of crazy, it’s okay. It’s cool because it’s who the person was, and that’s how it worked for them. I didn’t really get into judging them. Actually, I think if I’m going to paint them, it’s because I either love the work or there’s something in the space that I think is beautiful or makes a great painting. For me, they’re really just faces that I would love to look at. For example, talking about the Bacon, that insanity of that studio, the darkness of it, I think that goes to the essence of the artist. So it’s important to just paint that as it was.”

“BOLOGNA HOME AND STUDIO OF GIORGIO MORANDI, VIA FONDAZZA 36”



“I had a show at the Dallas Contemporary Museum in Texas. It was a show based on the work of Philip Johnson. It turned out to be, for me, a very cerebral show and very deliberate. After I finished that show, I was also turning 50, and I was making work but not feeling very satisfied with it. I decided to close the studio for a year. Close the studio to visits, but just to lock myself in there and work to see what else I could come up with. The interiors were the first thing that I thought, ‘This is interesting to me.’ In a way, you’re always painting yourself, even with the buildings and everything. I thought, ‘You know what? It’s probably a nice thing to look within.’ I hear that when people turn 50, this is kind of almost like a typical thing that happens. They start thinking about their lives and stuff, and I guess that cliché is true, at least for me.”

“DAVID BOWIE’S SLEEPING CAR, SIBERIA, 1973”



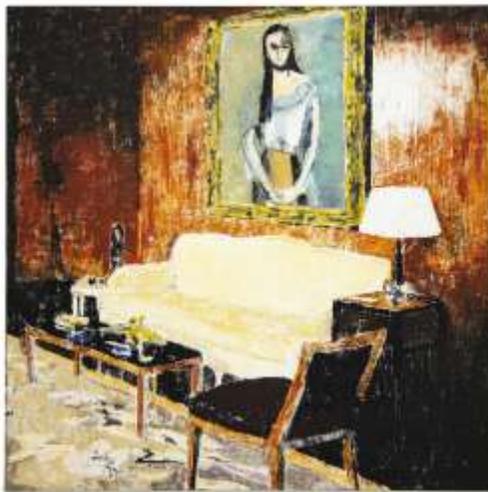
“When you talk about Bowie, [the Rolling Stones](#), you talk about that caliber of artist, that these are genius-level people. Everything that they touch or are around gets this aura of greatness or desirability, in an intellectual way, like Picasso. I love reading [John Richardson on Picasso](#) because this guy probably figured out what he was eating for lunch and liked for dinner. I want to know every detail of how these guys lived, and what they liked, and what they talked about. A glimpse into that brilliance. I think the interiors are very much about that hope of getting a glimpse into these creatives—whoever is brilliant at what they do and how these minds worked. That, to me, is just a kick.”

“ROLLING STONES IN RESIDENCE, VILLA NELLCÔTE”



“I was thinking about the interiors more as portraits. I was thinking of the interiors more as like making my own encyclopedia of cool. These are all people that I like, and I just wanted to do this register of these beautiful spaces of people that have been influential in my life or influential to me. Remember the Stones and Bowie? Anything that that level of genius have touch or been around, I want to know about, or I want to be around it as if it were contagious.”

“NEW YORK APARTMENT OF NELSON ROCKEFELLER, 810 FIFTH AVENUE”



“For me, strictly, I don’t put people in the buildings. I don’t put people in the interiors. It’s always a rule. I can do portraits of people, and I love doing portraits of people. But when it comes to the spaces or to the buildings, they have to be portraits of things. It’s like an attraction. An interior is like a mental construct. It’s like a muscle, part of the brain or part of the lung. It’s a reflection of their mind.”

“RESIDENCE OF ELVIS PRESLEY, 3764 ELVIS PRESLEY BOULEVARD,
MEMPHIS, TN GRACELAND, JUNGLE ROOM”



“I think that solitude is something that is a very much a part of my work. When you think about Latin America, solitude is central to literature and poetry of Latin America. Certainly, solitude is, for me, like a big element in my work. It’s kind of like a populated solitude, but still it’s something that comes built into my work.”

modern

MAGAZINE



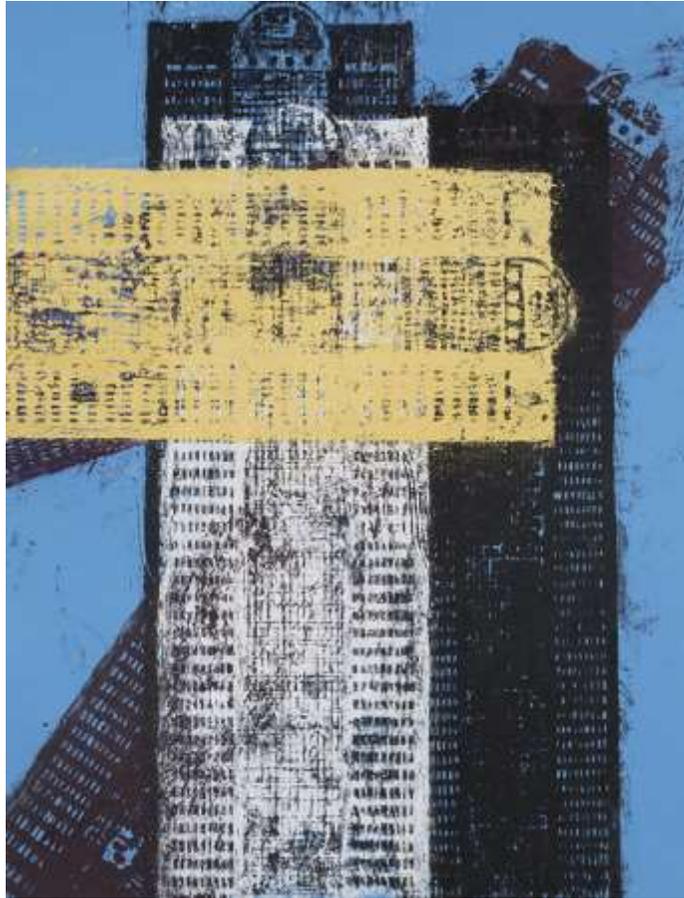
BECK HOUSE, 2016. | PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN BERENS; COURTESY OF ENOC PEREZ AND PETER BLUM GALLERY, NEW YORK.

EXHIBITION

Enoc Perez takes Philip Johnson to the canvas in Dallas

By [SAMMY DALATI](#) | February 27, 2018

Some artists paint portraits. New York–based artist Enoc Perez has made modernist architecture his subject. Painting in a slashing overlay style that seems to channel both Andy Warhol and Franz Kline, in *Liberty & Restraint*, an exhibition that opened last month at the Dallas Contemporary and eight locations throughout the city, he investigates the gallery of local buildings designed by architect Philip Johnson. MODERN's associate editor Sammy Dalati caught up with Perez at his cavernous studio in Astoria Queens, and asked him about his process and his inspiration for the show.



Comerica Tower Dallas, 2017. | Berens photo; courtesy of Enoc Perez and Peter Blum Gallery, New York.

Sammy Dalati/MODERN MAGAZINE: What got you interested in making paintings of modernist buildings?

Enoc Perez: I'm just a big fan of architecture. Kind of like how Warhol gravitated to and depicted movie stars, I always liked architecture, ever since I was a kid.

MM: Why Philip Johnson's work?

EP: There's an abundance of his buildings in Dallas and it just made sense. I had already done a show at Philip Johnson's Glass House and I had done a commission for a Philip Johnson building in Denver—the Wells Fargo Center there—so when the museum presented me with the idea, I thought, "You know, I've been working on the subject of Philip Johnson and I want to finish the subject." We started planning for the show during the presidential campaign and I had already been doing my homework on Johnson and thought "Oh, my God, this guy in many ways describes the moment we're in," in terms of his ideology, his politics, his ever-changing styles of architecture—he's almost like a father of post-capitalist architecture. You have to remember that this guy had a fascist past. He'd go to Nazi rallies. The inspiration for the Glass House was a house he saw in Poland that was burned down during the occupation and the only thing that was left was the floor and the chimney. He's a figure who has a double edge. He did a lot of great things for culture,

for American culture, he brought all these guys back from Germany—Albers, Mies van der Rohe, etc. On the other hand, there was this really weird time for him in the thirties.



Art Museum of South Texas, 2016. | Berens photo; courtesy of Enoc Perez and Peter Blum Gallery, New York.

MM: How do you make these paintings?

Enoc Perez: I select an image and project it onto a piece of paper that's placed up against a canvas. Oil paint is applied to the back of the paper, and when an assistant traces the projected image on its front, what you get on the canvas is something like a carbon-paper transfer—a primitive type of printmaking. That gives us the underpainting, and using little pieces of paper I push in even more color little by little. So at the end of the day we make a painting without using any brushes. Which isn't the whole point of the process, but it's a byproduct.



The Crescent, 2017. | Berens photo; courtesy of Enoc Perez and Peter Blum Gallery, New York.

MM: Dallas Contemporary’s exhibition notes mention that you “believe in painting,” and that this put you at odds with the faculty and students at Hunter College where you studied art in the nineties. Yet you’ve also said that your work is an investigation of the decay of utopian thinking. Would you say you look at the bright side or at the dark side?

EP: I believe in painting as a medium. I know that it can handle even opposite ideas. I can agree with the optimism of architects [who constructed modernist buildings] for a better tomorrow. Whether those visions succeeded or not—that’s a whole different ball game. Myself, I’m positive. I try to be optimistic, cautiously optimistic. Sometimes when I’m putting layer upon layer upon layer the image starts to disintegrate, just like probably the dream itself disintegrates. Do I want to keep dreaming? Of course, but you’re not blind to the reality.



[THINGS TO DO](#)

Things To Do In Dallas This Week: Feb. 19 – 22

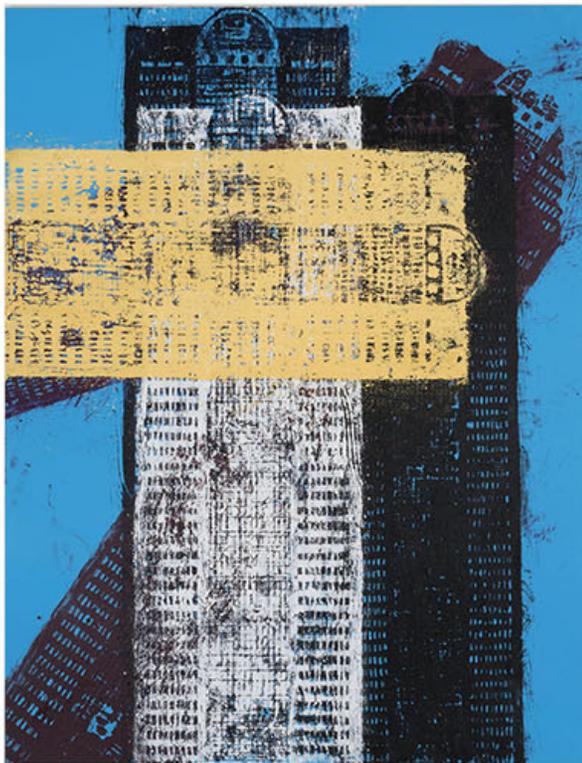
Where to find Vicente Fox, buy vinyl on sale, see art for free, and face Dallas' newest fitness challenge.

BY [LYNDSAY KNECHT](#) PUBLISHED IN [ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT](#) FEBRUARY 19, 2018 11:28 AM

Wed., Feb. 21

Dallas Women Entrepreneurs [holds their monthly networking event](#) at the Hotel InterContinental. Spots are filling quickly, according to the powers that be, so now's the time to sign up for the membership required to attend.

Parents with young children are invited to the Dallas Contemporary to take in painter and sculptor **Enoc Perez**'s study of the works of architect Philip Johnson at no cost. [The museum hosts a Stroller Tour](#) one Wednesday each month at 10 a.m.



PEREZ PAINTS JOHNSON'S DALLAS

Enoc Perez pays homage to the late Philip Johnson with *Liberty & Restraint*.

In January, Enoc Perez unveiled a new body of work that continues his examination of Philip Johnson's modernist architecture. Paintings of eight Johnson-designed structures that helped define the cultural identity of Dallas/Fort Worth comprise *Enoc Perez: Liberty & Restraint*. Dallas Contemporary's citywide exhibition brings the New York-based artist's varied palette to depictions of Johnson's surviving architecture in the region, including the Amon Carter Museum of American Art (Fort Worth; 1961), The Beck House (Dallas; 1964), John F. Kennedy Memorial (Dallas; 1970), Fort Worth Water Gardens (1974), Thanks-Giving Square (Dallas; 1976), The Crescent (Dallas; 1985), Comerica Tower (Dallas; 1987), and Cathedral of Hope (Dallas; 2010).

Relocating from his native San Juan, Puerto Rico, to New York City in the mid-80s to study painting at Pratt Institute, Perez has focused much of his practice on architecture, specifically Johnson, including a series of paintings of the Pritzker Prize-winner's Lipstick Building exhibited within the architect's Glass House in Connecticut. "He was able to say whatever he wanted to with architecture. The Comerica Tower, that's a bank; that's about

power," Perez comments.

Applying an incremental paint-layering technique, Perez "strips his landmark subjects of their functionality and reintroduces them as art objects through repetition as if to suggest the accumulated passings of a daily commute." In response to the outcome of the presidential election in November 2016, Perez extensively researched existing and destroyed US embassies—from Baghdad to Beijing—for another series. The artist is also known for his portraits, still lifes, and nudes. Describing an untitled sculpture installed at Thanks-Giving Square, Perez says, "It's all about our idea of America. And everything that was and is good and bad. It's the weirdest piece to put on an altar."

Perez was recognized in Dallas as MTV RE:DEFINE's honored artist in 2016. Accompanied by public installations at the Johnson locations, *Liberty & Restraint* invites the viewer to examine their relationship to the urban landscape by challenging the boundary between interior and exterior, and between architecture and art.

Liberty & Restraint will be on view at Dallas Contemporary through March 18 and within Johnson's landmarks through June. Dallascontemporary.org **P**

From left: Enoc Perez, *Comerica Tower Dallas*, 2017, oil on canvas, 120 x 92 in.; Enoc Perez, *Unfilled*, 2017, plaster and gold leaf, 39 x 14 x 19 in. Courtesy of the artist and Peter Blum Gallery.



Enoc Perez Explores Philip Johnson's Architecture— and How it Relates to the Trump Era

A new exhibition in Dallas spotlights the architect's Texas work

TEXT BY IAN VOLNER

Posted January 22, 2018



Philip Johnson's Art Museum of South Texas as painted by Enoc Perez, part of a new show focusing on the architect's buildings in Texas. Photo: Kevin Todora

In vivid washes of color; in overlaid stencil-like images; and in bronze sculptures of massed, crumpled-up forms, artist Enoc Perez uses a multimedia approach reminiscent of Warhol and Rauschenberg to both celebrate and satirize some of the 20th century's best-known buildings. In Dallas this month, he's turned his sights on controversial modern designer *Philip Johnson*: In a show sponsored by local art museum *Dallas Contemporary*, Perez has created works featuring Johnson's buildings, and then installed some of them inside the buildings themselves (of which Dallas has no fewer than six). The artist

took a break from the museum opening to talk about the intrigues and the afterlife of America's most infamous architectural gadfly.



Perez's rendition of Johnson's Beck House, completed in 1964. Photo: Kevin Todora

AD: How did you first become interested in Philip Johnson, and how did that lead you to Dallas?

Enoc Perez: I had been invited three years ago to do a print for the *Glass House* [Johnson's private estate and foundation in Connecticut]. When I saw the place, I fell in love with it. There's no hierarchy to the buildings there: The painting gallery, the sculpture gallery, everything is considered of equal importance. After that I started to get commissions in lobbies of Johnson buildings—I guess people thought I was a Johnson expert, even though I'm no architecture scholar, more of a fan. The curator of Dallas Contemporary said we should do something here, since there are so many Johnson buildings in the city. I did my homework and realized it's a gold mine, so I said, "Let's do it."



Works depicting the Crescent Dallas and the Beck House hung at Dallas Contemporary. Photo: Kevin Todora

AD: What kind of approach did you take in adapting Johnson's buildings into artistic artifacts?

EP: We started making paintings of them, thinking, for example, Why don't we make Franz Klines using the Comerica Building in Dallas? Then we moved onto some the buildings I like better, like his museums in Texas, making more paintings but also sculptures—like, doing architectural models but then turning them around, treating them as artisanal objects, like an African mask or Puerto Rican arts and crafts. Once I figured that out, the rest of the show came out pretty easily; I also did the more abstract paintings which in a way are kind of brutal, layer upon layer. Very much like our culture, in a way, brutal and un-delicate.



Johnson's Cathedral of Hope. Photo: Kevin Todora

AD: Is there some link, in your mind, between Johnson's work and our contemporary moment? Why tackle this subject now?

EP: Johnson was promiscuous in terms of his aesthetic. Some of it is good, and some of it is bad. And that lack of aesthetic judgment seems somehow connected to this Trump era. It determined my approach to the abstractions, for instance, like the way I treated the Crescent project Johnson did in Dallas—it's this slightly gaudy pseudo-French chateau, and looking at it becomes a meditation on the question "Oh my God, how did we get into this mess as a culture?" It's painfully apparent also in the lower level of Johnson's Thanks-Giving Square Chapel here: There all these placards on the wall saying "We're Grateful for Native Americans," "We're Grateful to the People of Dallas," and then one that says "We're Grateful for Exxon." This fruit punch of ideology, that's kind of what America is. There's a beauty to it, but it's also really crazy. So the sculpture we made, right there in the chapel, we made it to look like a piece of pagan worship. I don't know if I've discovered America in working on this project, but after 30 years of living here, I know I'm getting closer. I'm getting warm.

Dallas' Best Buildings Get Love From a Powerhouse Artist

Find Someone Who Looks at You the Way Enoc Perez Looks at Architectural Treasures

BY NATALIE GEMPEL // 01.12.18

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND PETER BLUM GALLERY, NEW YORK



Crescent, 2017

Enoc Perez has only visited Dallas a handful of times, but he's come

to know the city well. The Puerto Rico-born artist, known for his paintings of modernist buildings, has spent the last two years focusing on Dallas' architectural treasures. His upcoming show at the Dallas Contemporary, *Liberty & Restraint* examines the Texas-based work of renowned architect Philip Johnson. The exhibition is an artistic survey of some of the city's most famous structures, but it goes deeper than that.

“To me, [architecture] talks about who the people are that inhabit the places or make the places. It's a reflection of our own humanity in a way,” Perez says.

The artist removes the monuments from their places in reality and depicts them as art objects, using a Warhol-esque paint layering technique to create a repetitive, iconic effect.

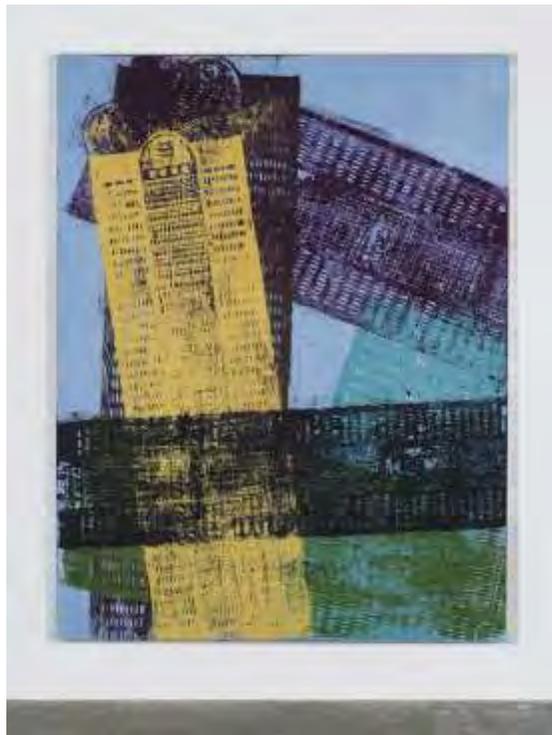


Detail of The Beck House, 2017

It wouldn't be unreasonable to say that Perez's fascination with buildings borders on obsession.

“Warhol loved the Hollywood stars – I love buildings, you know, I love structures, and that's why I paint them, really, out of admiration and love,” he says.

Perez has long admired the work of Johnson, so when he learned that he would have a show at the Dallas Contemporary, he leapt at the opportunity to highlight the architect's influence on the area.



Comerica Tower Dallas, 2017

“You have an abundance of Philip Johnson architecture right there in your backyard, it's actually kind of amazing. I thought it would be a good idea to point that out,” Perez says.

“Hopefully it makes people look at these things twice. You could be driving near a masterpiece everyday and not know it.”

Liberty & Restraint includes the depiction of and installation at eight buildings in Dallas and Fort Worth: The John F. Kennedy Memorial, Thanks-Giving Square, the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, The Crescent, Cathedral of Hope, The Beck House, Fort Worth Water Gardens and Comerica Tower. Engaging in an artistic dialogue with these local landmarks has given Perez a special understanding of the city.



JFK Memorial, 2017

“They say that everything’s bigger in Texas right?” Perez says. “I get a feeling that that’s true. The buildings themselves are super ambitious. And in some cases, like the Chapel of Hope, very progressive and forward-looking. It tells me that Dallas as a city has this feeling of improving itself and looking towards the future.”

“Liberty & Restraint” at Dallas Contemporary, January 14 through March 4. 161 Glass Street, 214.821.2522; dallascontemporary.org.

HYPERALLERGIC

At the 2017 Dallas Art Fair, Big Ambitions and the Big Mo

By Edward M. Gómez



Enoc Perez, "The Statler Hotel, Dallas" (2016), oil on canvas, 30 x 42 inches (photo courtesy of Peter Blum Gallery, New York)

From New York, dealer Peter Blum is showing paintings by the Puerto Rico-born, Long Island City-based artist Enoc Perez, who has long been interested in architecture and employs a complex process of pressing a sheet of paper covered with oil paint against the surface of a canvas, and then drawing on the back of the sheet as if it were a piece of carbon paper. He has referred to this method as "printmaking." It gives his finished images a haunting quality: modern hotels, Philip Johnson buildings, and Puerto Rican casitas become mysterious monuments, trapped in time.

PATRON

ART / CULTURE / DESIGN



BUILDING AS METAPHOR

New York-based artist Enoc Perez reimagines Philip Johnson's postmodernist designs.

BY PETER DOROSHENKO

Dallas Contemporary will present an upcoming exhibition with New York-based artist Enoc Perez in a citywide project that will place his artworks within various Philip Johnson buildings locally. Focusing on painting, sculpture, and architectural space, the exhibition will be the first time an artist has focused on Johnson's designs and buildings. The artworks and various locations will be a seminal examination between modernist architecture and contemporary art. Enoc Perez will also make an impression this spring at the Dallas Art Fair with Peter Blum Gallery.

Peter Doroshenko (PD): *Your finished paintings are very layered and complex; what process do you involve in the making of your paintings?*



Enoc Perez (EP): Process for me is the best way in which I can relate to New York painting. From Robert Rauschenberg to Andy Warhol, to more recently Christopher Wool and Phillip Taffe, they all use various techniques of printmaking to produce painting. This is almost exclusively a New York phenomenon. I use my own version of printmaking in which I apply the oil paint to the canvas using sheets of paper with the oil paint applied on the back of the paper, then I draw on to the paper transferring the oil paint to the canvas, like carbon paper. The end result is a completely printed image. The layering and surface mounting are the result of this process—a combination of time and message.

PD: *How do you choose a building to be the focus of a painting? Is it a personal investigation and later an orchestration into a unique setting?*

EP: The buildings I choose to paint are generally selected by my instinct. I don't necessarily look for buildings that are in the architectural canon. My instinct or interest in a building is directly connected to my history, my knowledge, and ideas. They are vehicles and metaphors. The paintings are the incarnation of those ideas and interests. For example, years ago I made paintings of hotels in my home island, Puerto Rico. I chose them because they were cool, they were also part of my own history, and I also understood them as beacons of colonialism. So it is never simple, even though I like to make it look simple.

PD: *Is there an overarching story being told through the final works? Is it historical, social, or political?*

EP: I am now working on a few bodies of work right now,

Top: Enoc Perez, *The Beck House*, 2016, oil on canvas, 98 x 200 in. Left: Enoc Perez, *The Beck House*, 2016, oil on canvas, 90 x 128 in. Opposite: Peter Doroshenko, photograph by Day, Kyiv

like casitas, which is the vernacular for people's, homes in Puerto Rico. Other directions include American Embassies and paintings of Philip Johnson buildings. These subjects are all inevitably political, historical, and social. It has become urgent especially in recent weeks for artists to address these issues directly and without fear. I don't see how art cannot be political especially after World War II.

PD: *What taboos are you trying to break with your artwork?*

EP: My own stupid taboos. Those that were taught to me and have no reason for existing.

PD: *You have been able to carve an important place for your work; what effect do you see your work having on the larger art world?*

EP: I hope I have; whatever has happened is because first and foremost I'm committed to my work. I never thought of larger implications. One thing that I can tell you is that from the beginning I wanted to be considered as a New York artist, not relegated to the Latin American Art intellectual and economical isolation. In that way I'm still fighting, but I know that I am a New York artist, and that is important to me being Puerto Rican. And I hope that my fight makes it easier for the next Puerto Rican. Like my buildings, I'm not in the canon, yet. **P**



ABOUT PETER DOROSHENKO

Peter Doroshenko is Executive Director at Dallas Contemporary. Before his arrival in Dallas, Doroshenko was president and artistic director of the PinchukArtCentre, Kiev. He has held director and curator positions over the past twenty years, including Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead; SMAK—Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Ghent; inova (Institute of Visual Arts), Milwaukee; Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston; and Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse. In 2007 and 2009, he was commissioner of the Ukrainian Pavilions at the Venice Biennale. In 2010, Doroshenko was the co-curator of the Busan Biennale in South Korea. Doroshenko has organized numerous one-person exhibitions over the years and has written or contributed to several books and numerous exhibition catalogues on artists. In 2010, Doroshenko published a monograph on collectors who have constructed their own personal museums entitled, *Private Spaces for Contemporary Art*. **P**

DENVER BUSINESS JOURNAL

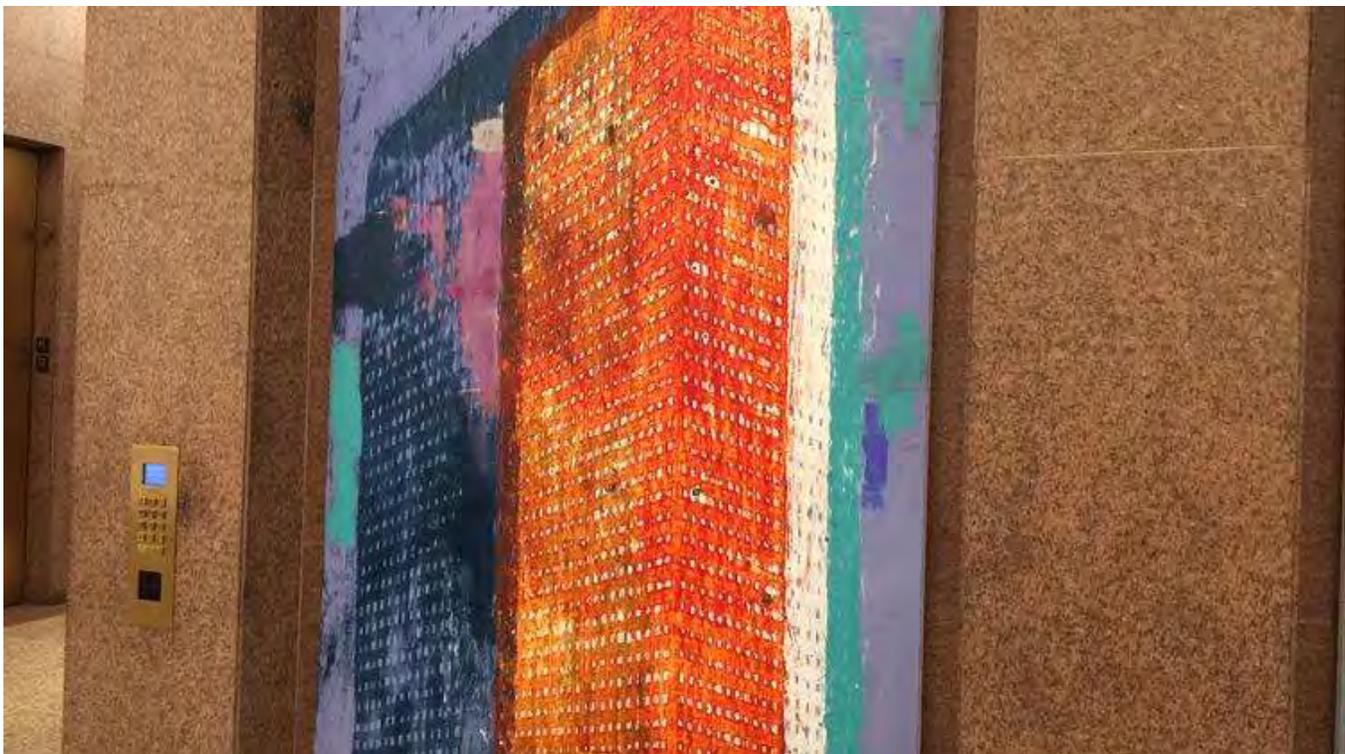
FINANCE & LAW

Here's a look at the new lobby, art inside Denver's Wells Fargo Center

Jun 8, 2016, 9:11am MDT

New York artist **Enoc Perez**, whose work has been displayed at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, unveiled 14 paintings Tuesday at the Wells Fargo Center in downtown Denver.

The building owner, real estate investment firm **Beacon Capital Partners**, commissioned Perez to create 14 paintings and five sculptures for the main lobby of what's widely known as "the cash register" building.



Fourteen paintings by New York based artist Enoc Perez are part of the redesign at the Wells Fargo Center

PETER BLUM GALLERY

Perez, known for his architecture pieces, used the iconic Wells Fargo Center as his inspiration.

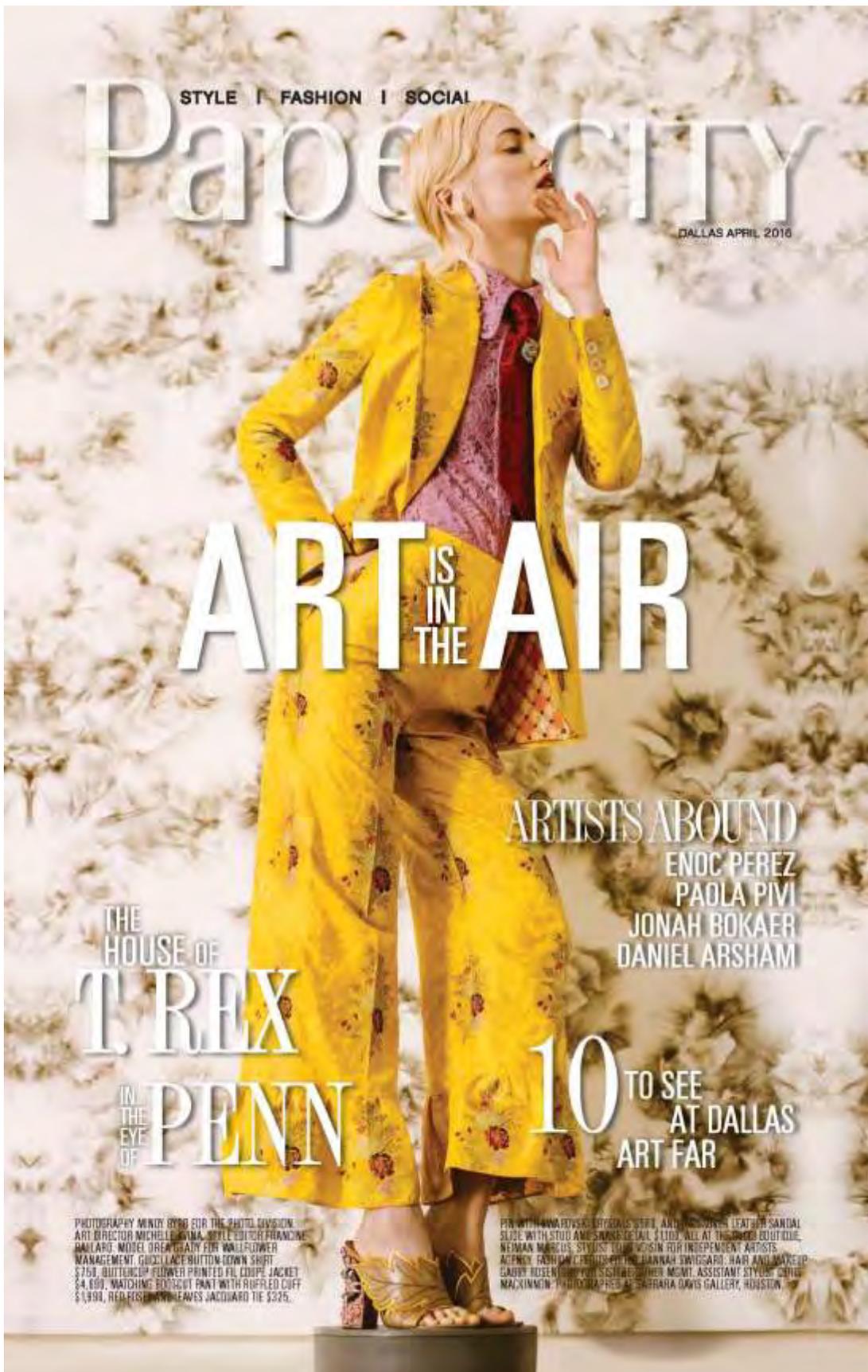
"It would be nice if I can make the day of the people who work here a little bit better," Perez said to a small crowd that gathered for the unveiling.

The Wells Fargo lobby redesign includes work by Manhattan-based experiential design firm ESI Design. Also inside the lobby is an eight-story digital installation in the building's glass atrium.

The installation in the Wells Fargo building is one of many art partnerships at Beacon's properties in cities such as Boston, New York City, Chicago and San Francisco.

The Wells Fargo installation is a series of screens that display natural wonders, including a flock of birds, waterfalls or a grove of trees.

MONICA MENDOZA | DENVER BUSINESS JOURNAL



STYLE | FASHION | SOCIAL
Paper City
 DALLAS APRIL 2016

ART IS IN THE AIR

THE HOUSE OF
T REX
 IN THE EYE OF
PENN

ARTISTS ABOUND
 ENOC PEREZ
 PAOLA PIVI
 JONAH BOKAER
 DANIEL ARSHAM

10 TO SEE
 AT DALLAS
 ART FAR

PHOTOGRAPHY: MINTY BYRD FOR THE PHOTO DIVISION
 ART DIRECTOR: NICHELLE ROMA, STYLE EDITOR: FRANCESCA
 BALLARO, MODEL: DREA GRAY FOR WALLFLOWER
 MANAGEMENT, GUCCI LACE BUTTON-DOWN SHIRT
 \$750, BOUTIQUE FLOWER PRINTED FIL COUPE JACKET
 \$4,000, MATCHING FITTED PANT WITH RUFFLED CUFF
 \$1,900, RED PERSIAN LEAVES JACQUARD TIE \$325.

PIV WITH ANA ROVSKI OPTICALS \$250, ARTIST'S GREEN LEATHER SANDAL
 SLIZE WITH STUD AND SHANK DETAIL \$1100, ALL AT THE GOOD BOUTIQUE,
 NEWMAN MARCUS, STYLIST: TINA KOZIN FOR INDEPENDENT ARTISTS
 AGENCY, FASHION CREDITS BY THE JANNAH SWIGGARD, HAIR AND MAKEUP
 GARRY ROSENBERG FOR SIGNEE/JOYER MOMI, ASSISTANT STYLIST: CONNOR
 MACKINNON, PHOTOGRAPHER: SARAHARA DAVIS GALLERY, HOUSTON.

IN CONVERSATION

MICHAEL CRAIG-MARTIN+

ENOC PEREZ

PUERTO RICO NATIVE ENOC PEREZ IS KNOWN FOR HIS ABSTRACT FIGURATIVE PAINTINGS AND DEPICTIONS OF MODERNIST BUILDINGS, FROM AN EERIE WORK OF HAVANA'S DILAPIDATED RIVIERA HOTEL TO AN ESOTERIC SERIES ON NEW YORK'S ONE WORLD TRADE CENTER. HIS WORK CONTRASTS STARKLY WITH THE VIVID CONCEPTUAL WORK OF LONDON-BASED ARTIST MICHAEL CRAIG-MARTIN, BUT THE TWO TALENTS HAVE AT LEAST ONE THING IN COMMON: BOTH HAVE BEEN RECOGNIZED AS THE HONORED ARTIST FOR THE MTV RE.DEFINE AUCTION AND GALA. CRAIG-MARTIN, WHO WAS LAUDED LAST YEAR, CHATS WITH PEREZ, WHO RECEIVES THE TRIBUTE THIS MONTH. EDITED BY CHRISTINA GEYER

MICHAEL CRAIG-MARTIN: AS LAST YEAR'S MTV RE.DEFINE HONOREE ARTIST, I'VE BEEN ASKED TO HELP INTRODUCE YOU TO A WIDER TEXAS AUDIENCE. YOU WERE BORN IN PUERTO RICO AND DID YOUR ART STUDIES IN NEW YORK. I'M SURE YOUR BACKGROUND AND EARLY EXPERIENCE HAD A BIG IMPACT ON YOUR LIFE.

Enoc Perez: Being born and raised in Puerto Rico, I understood what it meant to be Puerto Rican on the island. Coming to New York, I quickly understood what it means to be Puerto Rican outside of the island — it's twice the work. It meant I had to make work that was to be undeniable if I had any aspirations of moving ahead at all. It still affects my life. Acceptance is not just handed to anyone, even less to those perceived as [outsiders], so I'm still fighting to get mine. The world of culture, after all, is not as progressive as we believe ourselves to be.

HOW MANY LANGUAGES DO YOU SPEAK?

Three: English, Spanish and French.

HAVING A STRONG INTEREST IN MODERN ARCHITECTURE MYSELF, I'M FASCINATED THAT IT HOLDS SUCH A CENTRAL POSITION IN YOUR WORK. DOES ARCHITECTURE ACT AS A CRITICAL POINT OF CONTACT FOR YOU WITH CONTEMPORARY LIFE? HOW DID THIS INTEREST ARISE? DID YOU EVER CONSIDER BECOMING AN ARCHITECT?

I'm an architecture groupie. It all comes out of admiration. Architecture looks like whom we think we are and also like who we really are. I'm after the wonder of it — the irony, the beauty. Architecture is the embodiment of the contradiction of contemporary life. It illustrates the beauty of possibility and the crudeness of reality. Look, when terrorists wanted to attack our country, it was a building they attacked as a metaphor for us as a people. Architecture is central to our identity as a country — as a people. I remember being a child and going with my parents to many of the hotels in Puerto Rico. These

buildings impressed me to a point that I still remember it — in color. Biggest impression was the Conquistador Hotel in Fajardo, Puerto Rico. I found out later it was designed by Morris Lapidus. Beautiful — years before they made it bigger and ruined it. But the wonder of the original buildings is still with me. The irony of this beauty named El Conquistador in an island that's a colony is as clear in meaning as it is confusing to a child. That's where I come from. I never really wanted to be an architect. It is just not my temper. I would like to make a house, but I would see it as something else.

DO YOU TRAVEL SPECIFICALLY TO SEE CERTAIN BUILDINGS?

I've done it a couple of times for commissions but not on my own buck. I stumble upon them when I travel. I particularly like to find myself in buildings that I have previously made paintings of. It's like seeing someone you have been talking to for some time and finally meeting them in person. As people do sometimes, they exceed your expectations, and at times they disappoint. It's just my way. I started making paintings of buildings mostly based on my own memory — this place of solitude. What is always surprising to me is that I imagine these buildings to be bigger. Then when I'm there, the scale is always different.

DO YOU THINK OF YOURSELF AS A NATURAL PAINTER — SOMEONE FOR WHOM PAINTING IS YOUR MOST ACCESSIBLE FORM OF EXPRESSION?

Natural painter ... Yes! It is just how I understand things. The process leads me to find what I need. Thought and action and vice versa: Natural. I could draw as a kid.

WAS THERE A BREAKTHROUGH MOMENT IN YOUR WORK OR CAREER THAT GAVE RISE TO A MOMENTOUS CHANGE?

Breakthroughs are those moments that all artists live for. You start working on something, and it is like jumping into an

abyss, with the hope of holding onto some breakthrough on your way down to stay alive. Every day. That I can remember, two times: first, when I realized that I had developed my own way of constructing a painting, and second, when I realized that I had something bigger in that little painting of the Normandie Hotel than I thought I had. I just knew.

HOW MUCH DO YOU ENGAGE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA? HAS SOCIAL MEDIA MADE A DIRECT IMPACT ON YOUR WORK OR HOW YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR WORK AND ITS AUDIENCE?

I do engage in social media. I love it. It can be empowering for artists because it allows you to create your own narrative, rather than having someone else do that on your behalf. It also gives you a bigger voice. I do like that social media lets you see almost immediately what aspect of your work resonates with others. That being said, I don't think that it affects my work a lot. I make the work that I need to make, regardless. The resonating part is just icing on the cake. The cake is to make the work.

WHAT COMES NEXT FOR YOU? SHOWS, PROJECTS, TRAVEL, PERSONAL?

Next, going to Dallas to get this honor that I'm most happy to receive. Will be having a show at the Dallas Contemporary, which I'm working on already. And, of course, whatever I come up with in between.

ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE DALLAS ART SCENE? I'M SURE EVERYONE THERE WILL MAKE YOU FEEL AS WELCOME AS THEY DID ME.

Dallas has always been good to me. One of my early shows was there with Kenneth Turner and John Runyon. I remember going to a restaurant that at the time was in this mobile home, and I had a burger with all these jalapeño peppers. Best burger I have ever had to this date. I love Dallas, and I mean that.

artnet®

ART WORLD

David Ebony's Top 10 New York Gallery Shows for October

By David Ebony, Friday, October 23, 2015

#6 Enoc Perez, at Peter Blum, through November 14

Someone had to do it—that is, produce the first iconic paintings of the brand new “Freedom Tower.” It's a good thing that it's a painter of Enoc Perez's stature and talent. Known for his painstaking renderings of storied structures like the Marina Towers in Chicago, or the Fountainebleau Hotel in Miami, Perez takes a cue from Andy Warhol in this haunting series of large canvases (80 by 60 inches). Featuring subtle variations on a single image, One World Trade Center, most of these works are set against shimmering silver-leaf backgrounds.



The ten works lining the walls of the gallery deliver a singular punch, echoing the monolithic presence of the Skidmore, Owings and Merrill-designed skyscraper itself. In the series, the Puerto Rico-born, New York painter seems to have borrowed Warhol's silkscreen stencil technique of overlapping, identical images. Perez's work, however, results from a painstaking transfer process involving oil-stick drawing imprints on the canvases, and countless layers of oil pigment. This series elicits many emotional responses. Like architectural ghosts, the multiple images conjure the Twin Towers, conveying a feeling of loss and foreboding. Another way to view the series, with its reference to Warhol's "factory," is as an homage to New York City itself, a paean to the ever-vibrant, indestructible Big Apple.

TimeOut New York

Enoc Perez



Peter Blum Gallery, through Nov 14

One World Trade Center gets star treatment in Enoc Perez's recent paintings: Perez created his compositions by laying oil stick drawings face down on silver-leafed canvas to imprint the gritty pigment. Pictured from below, the building repeats and stutters like a misregistered reproduction. The effect recalls Andy Warhol's *Double Elvis*, and like that icon of celebrity, Perez seems to want to make NYC's newest landmark into an object of veneration.

But Perez is also conjuring memory and history: One World Trade Center's echoing image often evokes the Twin Towers. He relegates the new structure's optimistic reflectiveness to the background, leaving the edifice itself matte and crusted. In some panels, tarry black dominates, leaving the impression of



One World Trade Center

something burnt and ravaged. In more colorful versions, Crayola blues, greens and yellows appear sickly instead of exuberant. In Perez's hands, the august presence of the subject comes off as jittery and moody—a vision of the shiny present haunted by the past.—*Joseph R. Wolin*

THE BOTTOM LINE A building stands in the shadow of another.

October 21–27, 2015 TIMEOUT.COM/NEWYORK **51**



FASCINATING ART DISPLAYS

by Terry Trucco



Towering Hues

Artist Enoc Perez explores the charged significance of what had been called the Freedom Tower, New York's newest architectural icon, in *One World Trade Center*. Applying paint to paper and pressing it onto silver canvases, Perez handcrafts luminous paintings like "One World Trade Center" (*above*, 2015) in layers. The results distort and collapse, reflecting the Puerto Rico-born artist's efforts to analyze and confront a building fraught with meaning.

| **Peter Blum Gallery, 20 W. 57th St.,
212.244.6055, thru Nov. 14**

QUEST

OCTOBER 2015

SEVEN ART SHOWS TO SEE THIS FALL

They're bold. They're thought-provoking. And they're some of the most ambitious exhibitions we've come across this year.

BY ALEX TRAVERS

PETER BLUM GALLERY / 20 West 57th Street; 212.244.6055

Enoc Perez's first solo show at Peter Blum Gallery—titled "One World Trade Center" and on view until November 14—features 10 vertical oil paintings (roughly 80 by 60 inches) of the recently constructed Freedom Tower. At its heart, "One World Trade Center" isn't really about the building itself. It's more about the power of pop culture and evolution. Each Warholian image of the building is overlapped by another in a different hue, smuggling away the tower's inherent stability. It's as though Perez is fairly certain that the future, even with all its bright and bold promises, holds no definitive answers. But that, I suppose, is not his predicament alone.

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND
PETER BLUM GALLERY, NEW YORK



*This page:
Enoc Perez's "One
World Trade Center"
(2015), oil on canvas;
an installation shot of "One
World Trade Center," on
view at Peter Blum
Gallery through
November 14
(inset).*

HUFFPOST ARTS & CULTURE

Artist Interview: Enoc Perez

September 23, 2015
Sacha Mendel, interviewer

Renown for his utopian paintings of building structures and provocative nudes, Enoc Perez is exhibiting his collection, *One World Trade Center*, at the Peter Blum Gallery in New York City. In this interview, Perez shares with Arthena a little about New York, the art world and his development in it.

Arthena: What is the art for you?

Enoc Perez: Making art is my oasis. Art is the one thing that I need to do every day, it's my compulsion. The art world is the people that you work with, coexist, tolerate and sometimes befriend. Also the people that love art, profit from art and theorize about it. The market is something that is real and it is good to understand, I'm not an expert on it but it can be capricious and cruel. At times good. The important thing for me is the art itself regardless of the market. That's what I signed up for.

A: What has inspired the growth of your work?

EP: The masters, great artists, are to me those that I trust to look and study for many years. I started to look at New York artists before coming to the city at age nineteen, at the time Warhol, Jean Michel Basquiat, and Twombly were at the top of my list, they still are. In terms of process, from Warhol, I got the idea of using ways of printmaking into painting. From Basquiat the use of oil sticks and from Twombly the preoccupation with Mark making. Using printmaking in the process of painting is a New York thing and it is imperative to make sense within your context.

In terms of changes in my work, that is something central to me, I like to accomplish something new every time I work, otherwise boredom gets to me. And even myself I look in the mirror and every day I change. So the work changes as well as I hopefully evolve.



Enoc Perez, *One World Trade Center*, 2015
oil on canvas, 80 x 60 inches (203.2 x 152.4 cm)

NEW YORK OBSERVER

Critic Walter Robinson on 9/11 Art and Moving Past Schmaltz

September 18, 2015
Walter Robinson, writer

The wreckage at Ground Zero had barely stopped smoking before plans were set in motion to build on the site again. It's a commonplace: no sooner does one epoch come to a tragic end than a new one begins its ominous rise. At Ground Zero, the symbolism is stark, as a destroyed "world trade center" has been replaced by an architectural emblem of Fortress America. The so-called Freedom Tower, as yet barely tenanted, now commands the New York City skyline with an ominous authority.

First to mark this new era, to look forward rather than back, is the New York artist Enoc Perez, whose exhibition of new paintings at Peter Blum Gallery on West 57th Street takes as its subject the Freedom Tower, or "One World Trade Center," as the building is formally known.

"I thought it was time," said Perez, who has been for a while known for evocative and simple images of classical modernist buildings. A series of ten vertical paintings, measuring 80 by 60 inches each and done with thick paint in primary colors on a silver ground, ring the large open space like Stations of the Cross. It is a series, with each picture being a variation on a single image.



Enoc Perez, *One World Trade Center*, 2015
oil on canvas, 80 x 60 inches (203.2 x 152.4 cm)
EP15-08

Perez suggests the uncertainties of our communal future by using a triple, overlapping image of the tower, as if seen with eyes that can't quite focus. The triplicate image on silver—a spattered and clotted field, evocative of a building site that once was ashes, as Perez notes—is an easy reference to Warhol's Elvis paintings, not to mention his eight-hour-long film *Empire*, both ready emblems of the world domination of U.S. pop culture. The coming century promises to be even cooler and tougher, if that is imaginable. One World Trade Center itself is famously reinforced, an armored tumescence that rises to a geometrically blunt tip, a shape that is lethal but curiously undistinguished, like a truncheon or a cattle prod.

Where the artist's older works look back retrospectively at the architectural triumphs of the 20th century, embodying a kind of dream image of the modernist utopia, his new paintings look forward. They remind us that we are in the 21st century, an era overshadowed by an increasingly dystopian American sovereignty. It's painting as a blunt instrument, as unthinking and brutally powerful as the country itself.



At Danziger Gallery, a Pair of Artists United by Playing with Abstraction

May 7, 2015

Hilary Moss, writer



Enoc Perez, *Untitled*, 2014

“If Hugh Hefner and Alexander Calder had a child, this is what it would look like,” says the artist Enoc Perez of his “Cut Shapes” series. Currently on display at Danziger Gallery, the photo collages emerged from his paintings of nudes that he deemed not up to par. “I had a lot in storage and I thought, ‘What do I do with these?’” he says. “So, I started to add abstractions, like ‘little Calder,’ and each turned out to be a better painting” — and to play with censorship, plenty of which Perez has encountered on Instagram. (“You have no

PETER BLUM GALLERY

idea how many posts of mine have been taken down because they don't meet the community standards," he says.) He then decided to pull pictures of women from their social media accounts and apply the same principle, both an organic extension of his practice and a response to the age of digital sharing. "And," Perez continues, "I like covering certain parts because people's imaginations complete the job."

"Cut Shapes" is installed alongside the late Inge Morath's "Masquerades," a set of portraits that depicts the subjects clad in Saul Steinberg-designed paper-bag masks, photographed from 1959 to 1963. As a self-described Morath fan, Perez notes that he's in good company — and "this type of show makes more sense than grouping you with artists of your own generation that you might not have anything to do with," he says. "These are the types of relationships I want to see in the art world."

BLOUIN ARTINFO

Enoc Perez's Instagram Picassos at Galerie Nathalie Obadia

June 15, 2015

Nicholas Forrest, writer



Untitled (Instagram), 2014, oil on canvas, 60 x 48 inches (152.4 x 121.9 cm)

Galerie Nathalie Obadia has opened an exhibition of new paintings by Puerto Rico-born American painter Enoc Perez who is best known for his utopian paintings of modernist buildings as well as his provocative nudes. With his new series of paintings, Perez “attempts to reinvent Cubism in the moment of Instagram, Facebook, and other social networks,” according to Galerie Nathalie Obadia.

Drawing influence from Picasso, whose paintings he has collaged with images from Instagram followers and other photographic self-portraits posted by women on social networks, Perez has created works that are

PETER BLUM GALLERY

somewhere between photography, collage, and drawing. “In these paintings, Picasso’s body of work becomes a pictorial genre, like portraiture, landscapes and still lifes,” Perez explains

“Like many other artists — Lichtenstein, Julian Schnabel, Richard Prince and many others — I always wanted to paint my own Picassos, I just had to find a means,” he says. “I wanted to represent the photos and paintings with a certain aggressiveness, in a very direct manner but without cruelty: and it had to resemble our moment in time.”

“The result is a very pure experience of painting in rediscovering Picasso by actually quoting him directly. And also a painting that is full of seemingly contradictory ideas living in some kind of nervous harmony. And I like that because that type of thing is something that I believe painting can hold well.”

Revealing the time and effort invested in the creation of each work, Perez’s multi-layered, highly worked surfaces, executed in his signature silvery, monochrome palette, express the energy and vitality of the social media realm while at the same time subvert the expendability of digital sphere and the detached immediacy of its frenzied devotee, occupying the contested space between cultural artefact and social document.

Enoc Perez is at Galerie Nathalie Obadia until July 25, 2015.

THE EAST HAMPTON STAR

SHINES FOR ALL

Enoc Perez's 'Summer Job'

August 28, 2014
Jennifer Lantieri, writer

The frothy riff touches on social media, appropriation, modern art, and, if you're feeling academic in these lazy dog days, Lacanian notions and related theories of the subject and object of the gaze in art

While some of us were basking in the sun or sitting in bumper-to-bumper traffic to get to the next much-hyped event, Enoc Perez was hard at work in his East Hampton studio on the pieces presented in "Summer Job" at Harper's Books in East Hampton.

The frothy riff touches on social media, appropriation, modern art, and, if you're feeling academic in these lazy dog days, Lacanian notions and related theories of the subject and object of the gaze in art.

This series has its roots in the artist's earlier and loftier form of appropriation, namely using elements of Picasso's compositions in combination with his exploration of the painted nude or on their own. Now, he has taken images from Instagram of minimally dressed women, from amateur selfies to more professional photos, and added collage and his own painted marks. The applied shapes resemble some of Picasso's own abstracted female forms, the cutouts of Matisse, and even, perhaps with this summer's Gagolian show of Marcel Duchamp in mind, a group of "Stoppages" in one work.

Of course, Duchamp's Dada explorations of collage and readymades were seminal and helped define the form. His rebranding of Mona Lisa postcards and popular advertisements with his own predilection for puns, the off-color joke, and sexual innuendo inspired generations to follow.

One of the first works in the show, a superimposed "Desmoiselles d'Avignon" on a poster for the Harmony Korine film "Spring Breakers," serves as a bridge between this higher form of art play and a film that used the nominally clad "Girls Gone Wild" culture as a plot device. The mash-up of women behaving outside of socially acceptable norms then and now is punchy in a way that is more powerful than might immediately be surmised. Its color bath of bloody red suggests violence, menace, and carnal love.

That crossover work is the heaviest in the show in terms of art historical heft and impact. The others are more playful, coming from a small and more informal book the artist used to plan the series before he turned to the larger works on paper and canvas displayed in the gallery. Yet, it colors those pieces, making them more fraught than their romping beach-y revelry might otherwise suggest.

Most of the canvas transfers and works on paper were worked out previously, with the cutout shapes predetermined. One inkjet piece on photographic paper is more freestyle, using a few small shapes but taking hints of paint that are found on some of the other works and applying them expressively in wide swathes around and over the figure. Although the splats, splashes, squiggles, and the above-referenced shapes by artists from a prior century are engaging, the wash of paint gives the work a deeper, more substantial feeling. It seems like a natural progression and is reductive in its expansion over the composition, allowing only glimpses of what the artist wants to be seen.



Enoc Perez borrowed posts from Instagram as a starting point for his collaged compositions on paper and canvas, then used shapes reminiscent of Matisse, Picasso, Baldessari, and Duchamp to cover the subjects.

PETER BLUM GALLERY



The cutout shapes may function as a censor's blue dots or pixelated screens, thwarting our ability to see the original image in its entirety and thereby making it all the more attention-grabbing, casting viewers into the role of voyeur. Not only are the body's parts or its entirety obscured, but the faces are also always partially or wholly hidden, raising issues of objectification and a hint of malfeasance, the identities hidden to protect the innocent.

The collaged bits make it into a happy game, playful colors and forms replacing a need for more visual information. With the paint, the artist reminds his audience who is in control. Rather than a frisky gambit, we see a more serious attempt to obscure and confound and a more direct homage to Richard Prince, another one of the artist's predecessors and inspirations for this series.

Since all of the works are dated from this year and were completed this summer, the question becomes: Is this where the series came from,

or is it where it is going? In his earlier series involving transfers of oil stick drawings of buildings onto canvas, the brushwork he used to embellish them came later on. It would seem that this could be the same case here and a more suitable style for the cooler and more serious months ahead.

The show will remain on view through Columbus Day.

Paddle8

8 Firsts with Enoc Perez

The painter and sculptor on his first muse, his first post-exhibition meal, and the first works that made him want to be an artist.

January 27, 2015
Rebecca Bates, interviewer



Artist Enoc Perez. Photo: Billy Farrell/BFAnyc.com

McDonald's isn't normally the venue you might choose to celebrate a milestone (unless you're in college, it's 2am, and that milestone is how many beers your roommate just had). But when Enoc Perez was looking to commemorate one of his first shows, a lonely McDonald's meal was the best the then-budding artist could do. "It got better," he assures Paddle8. It's the "firsts" that can often make or break an artist's early career: the first breakthrough in a new medium, which piece you sell first (and to whom), the first established artist to notice you. Enoc Perez is perhaps best known for the recurring architectural references in his paintings, faded façades of the world's most notable buildings. Perez, whose work numbers among the major pieces in a sale benefiting Lycée Français de New York, tells Paddle8 about the impetus for his first architectural painting (hint: there was a

girl involved), the first day he arrived in New York from Puerto Rico, and his childhood experiences with art.



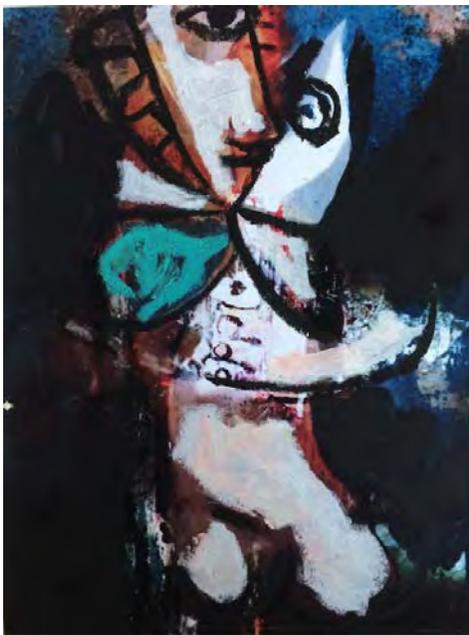
EnocPerez, "Fontainebleau, Miami," 2014. Photo via enocperez.com

Paddle8: What was your first experience with art?

Enoc Perez: My first experience with art was at home looking at an art encyclopedia that my father had in his library. We got it at a supermarket. I was always waiting for the next volume. My dad also took me to museums as much as he could starting early. The first big memory I have of being impressed to the point of going back home to draw in a hurry was at El Museo del Prado in Madrid. I must have been nine or ten, and I saw [Francisco] Goya's *Maja Desnuda*, [Diego] Velazquez's *Las Meninas*, and also a beautiful Ingres nude. The impression was so strong that I still remember the excitement and empowerment that I felt. The next thing from my youth that I remember was when I saw *Guernica* in New York before Tony [Shafrazi] got to it. We got a catalogue that I still have today.

P8: You grew up in Puerto Rico, but went to school in New York. What did you do on your first day in the city?

EP: I organized my room and went to a party that night. Scary and great.



Enoc Perez, "Untitled," 2014.

P8: Who was the first artist you admired who took an interest in your work?

EP: David Salle many years ago, and more recently, Richard Prince. Both formative artists to me; meeting them felt validating and inspiring. Being fortunate to call both of them friends has been and continues to be a lesson in the love, dedication, and work ethic of being a painter. A lesson in intellectual freedom. The real thing.

P8: What was your first major work that you sold? What did you buy with the money from that first major sale?

EP: The first major works that I sold were sold at the same time, Ponce Intercontinental Hotel and Puerto Rico Sheraton Hotel, one to Peter Brant and the other to Tony Shafrazi. To this day, I don't know who spotted the paintings first. Tony says it was him, and Peter says it was him. I love both of them, Peter and Tony. I bought stretchers and supplies to make more paintings with the money I made.

P8: What did you do to celebrate the opening of your first big show, either a solo or group exhibition?

EP: I remember one of the first shows—not sure if it was a group or solo, but I was by myself. I went to McDonald's and had a large coke and a quarter-pounder. Alone. It got better as the years went by.

P8: What was the first artwork by another artist that you collected?

EP: A Jean-Michel Basquiat drawing.



Enoc Perez, "Normandie," 2012.

*P8: So much of your work engages with architectural history. What's the first building that you depicted in your Architecture series?

EP: The first building that I made was early in 2001, a painting of the Normandie Hotel. I made that painting because I had just met this beautiful woman who was married at the time, I wanted to make a show about her so I had to make the show in code because of her status. I knew the history of this hotel in Puerto Rico that was designed by a Puerto Rican architect as a love letter to his French wife. I thought it was a fitting subject since the beautiful girl that I was after is French. Carole is today my wife and mother of my children. I'm an architecture groupie, but the first architecture was about a woman.

P8: Do you remember the first sculpture you created?

EP: I remember the first sculpture I made that I consider to be successful. I wanted to make sculptures for years, and I realized that if I used the subject of my first architecture pieces, that may lead me somewhere. I had a swizzle stick from the Normandie Hotel so I based it on that. It's funny with sculpture, because what I come up with are a painter's sculpture, not a sculptor's sculpture. I think it may be the same for a sculptor making painting.



Gilles Mendel + Enoc Perez

The love affair between art and fashion heats up.

December 3, 2014

Alix Browne, writer

The French designer Gilles Mendel and the Puerto Rican painter Enoc Perez met a few years ago at a gala for New York's Dia Art Foundation. "There were some ladies at our table complaining about not having cable after Hurricane Sandy," Perez recalls. Mendel, whose Jewish grandmother endured the Nazi occupation of Paris, turned around and told them, in his gallant way, to knock it off. "At that moment, I thought, Okay, this is the person I want to talk to," Perez says. "We've been talking ever since."

Blank Canvas

The dialogue between the artist and the designer reached a high point early this year when they joined forces on the J. Mendel spring 2015 collection. "As friends, we have been able to discuss ideas," Perez says. "We like to imagine, conspire, and push each other creatively in conversation." The collaboration is a result of those talks. Adds Perez, "We share a lot of values as artists. We could not predict the result, but I suspect that we both knew what it would look like. We trust each other – how many people can you say that about?"

Work in Progress

For Mendel, the first challenge was to translate Perez's work into textiles. He didn't want to merely make prints based on Perez's paintings of modern architecture, but to also capture the quality and feeling of his layered application of paint and silver leaf. "The far greater challenge, however, was to

transform these vivid, opulent fabrics into beautiful, wearable clothes,” Mendel says. “No one wants to look like they’re wearing a painting!” He offset the texture and color by keeping the silhouettes sleek and architectural. “Architecture is another point of intersection between Enoc’s work and my own.”

Exhibition-Worthy

When the collection finally came down the runway, each man had a renewed appreciation for the other’s work. “I learned that the creative process is a very similar experience in all mediums,” Perez says. “I now know that making a good dress is hard, and making a bad one must be just as hard.” The artist was particularly thrilled about his role as muse. “I’ve never been in the position of inspiring anything. I knew that I was looking at a masterpiece – Gilles’s masterpiece. It’s a beautiful thing.”

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

November 2013
 Stephen Wallis, writer



Enoc Perez at his Studio in East Hampton, NY, with paintings that incorporate works by Picasso.
 Portrait by Joshua McHugh

Chalk it up to middle age, but Enoc Perez has never been more productive or creatively rangy. “You reach a point where you don’t feel like you have to prove anything, you just paint for yourself,” says the 46-year-old Manhattan-based artist. “I’m going to keep making art. Lately more is more.” Perez’s signature works – large, seductive paintings of modernist buildings, from hotels in his native Puerto Rico to icons such as New York’s Lever House and Chicago’s Marina City towers – are owned by major museums and influential collectors like Peter Brant and Aby Rosen. The earliest examples were made via a meticulous process of transferring oil-stick drawings to canvas, sometimes dozens of layers of them, by hand. A couple years ago Perez began using a brush as well, giving the works a more painterly, abstract feel, with thick drips and daubs adding texture and complexity – “almost a sense of decay,” he notes. At the same time, his colors got more extreme, trending toward acid hues or dark, moody tones. “It’s not a naturalistic palette, because I want the works to be discovered as paintings first, not as images of architecture,” says the artist, who just completed a series on buildings by Swiss architects for a spring show at Thomas Ammann Fine Art in Zurich.

But Perez is also moving into entirely new territory, namely with sculptures based on his collection of vintage swizzle sticks, most from Caribbean hotels. The finished works, several of which he debuted in January at Acquavella Galleries – his New York dealer – are cast in bronze or aluminum then painted white, and stand up to ten feet tall. Composed of enlarged versions of the stirrers fused together, the pieces suggest playful, oddly enchanting totems commemorating some faded tropical paradise. “They look like disasters – they’re broken,” the artist says, acknowledging the sense of “failed utopia” and disillusioned modernist ideals that pervades his work.

Perez also paints retro-ish, slightly kitschy nudes (the full scope of his output is chronicled in a monograph coming out from Assouline in December), and he has embarked on another series that involves making digital prints that combine those nudes with works by Picasso, no less, and then adding layers of paint and silver leaf. “I’m addressing perhaps the most important artist in history – that makes anyone nervous,” says Perez. “It’s about shifting out of my comfort zone.”



A 2013 painting of a Herzog & de Meuron building under construction in Beirut. Biblioteca Jose M. Photo: Kent Pell/courtesy of Acquavella Galleries



Lázaro, UPR, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, 2010. Photo courtesy of Acquavella Galleries

Studio Visit: Enoc Perez Previews His New Picasso-Inspired Series

August 2, 2013

Rachel Corbett, writer



Perez and one of his Picasso-inspired drawings at his Midtown studio

The Puerto Rican-born painter Enoc Perez is best known for his "brushless" paintings of modernist architecture. The process more closely resembles printmaking than traditional painting, and involves the artist drawing an image on one side of a sheet of paper, and coating the reverse in paint. Perez then affixes the painted side to a canvas and traces over the drawing to impress the image onto its surface. The effect distorts the lines into the cross-grained, seemingly weather-worn portraits of old hotels and nude figures that have become his signature.

The work has become increasingly sought-after. In 2010, Perez joined **Bill Acquavella's** white-glove Upper East Side gallery, and he has held shows at **Lever House** and the **Corcoran Gallery of Art**. Now, Perez says he has found the stability and confidence to begin experimenting even further. For his latest body of work, he plans to produce inkjet paintings that will deal with one of the most closely canvassed subjects in art history: **Picasso**.

Perez gave Artspace's **Rachel Corbett** a tour of his Midtown studio, where he is currently at work on the new body of canvases inspired by the modern master, plus a series of Swiss architecture paintings for a show next

year with Zurich's **Thomas Ammann Fine Art**, and a book collaboration with the French fashion designer **Gilles Mendel**.

You are best known for your paintings of modernist architecture, yet the prototype collages on your wall right now are mash-ups of Picasso paintings with your own nudes. Why the change in subject matter?

I always wanted a Picasso, so I made one for my house three or four years ago. Now that I'm 45, I feel like I can go there. You have to have the courage; if you're going to approach another painter like that you better be damn sure you know what you're doing. Think about Deborah Kass with the Warhol—those are awesome because she knows exactly where she's going with that. So the first thing I did was call Richard Prince, because he had done Picassos. So he came to my studio earlier this year and I told him how I've always wanted to do Picassos and he said, "Why don't you do them?" It made me feel good because these are deep waters—Lichtenstein has made some of the greatest Picassos, Richard has made amazing Picassos. So the fact that he said, "do it, man" made me feel really good.

Which Picasso periods are you looking to source material from?

I'm a big fan of late Picasso, but I'm looking at all periods.

Will you produce the works in your signature print-painting process?

I'm going with inkjet for these because I already have the collages made on [the iPad app] Brushes, which is the same one that David Hockney uses. I could literally collage the images on canvas and then paint on top, but if I have the collage made already, why not use it? You have to embrace the technology. Basquiat was out there using color Xerox before anyone else was using it. That's just part of it.

You've left your comfort zone in the past when you made a series of vertical bronze sculptures inspired by cocktail stirrers.

I had **been** trying to make sculpture for five years, but had never been able to until last year. I have this enormous collection of drink stirrers, an attic full of them, including one from the Normandie [the Puerto Rican hotel that was the subject of Perez's first architecture painting]. So last year I scanned it in 3D and made it a little bigger and made a little collage out of it. I don't really know how to sculpt, so I called a few friends; I thought I had something in my hands but I wasn't sure, I couldn't see the art in it. So my neighbor Bob Colacello came over and said they were good, and I called Peter Brant, and he liked them, and then David Mugarabi came by and said "these are great." And, of course, my dealer really liked them too. In fact, he said, let's do a show, which I wasn't expecting.

Do you plan to continue making sculpture?

I'm making more now actually. I just made a palm tree that I will cast in aluminum for my garden because I can't grow palm trees in the Hamptons.

Your imagery has become increasingly weathered and abstract over the years, partly due to the fact that you recently began using a brush to incorporate your own "imperfections" on the canvas. What inspired the change?

I had been making very figurative paintings before and they were very well resolved, but so well resolved that I don't think the complexity of it came through. They were made the same way, without brush-use, but they turned out so figuratively perfect. So one day Tony Shafrazi says, "I was looking at your painting in my apartment and, you know what, if you take a loupe and look really close, you can see the struggle." When he got up close, he saw the whole thing disintegrating, but you had to use a magnifying glass. So it got me thinking, maybe if I untangle this matter, not simplify it, but decompose it a little, it'll be more interesting. So I got some brushes, which was kind of like breaking my own rule, I don't know why—people had been introducing me at parties as the guy who paints without brushes, but who cares? So I started to incorporate brushes and looking at all these abstract artists, like Cy Twombly and Rothko, and I started to relate to the palette.

Bloomberg

Faded Hotels, Swizzle Sticks, Gilbert & George: Hot Art

February 6, 2013

Katya Kazakina & Lili Rosboch, writers

Feb. 6 (Bloomberg) -- In Enoc Perez's large-scale paintings, images of grand hotels seem to disintegrate amid accumulating paint.

In "The Good Days," his second solo show at Acquavella Galleries, the New York-based artist revisits modern architecture of his native San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Perez is known for giving landmark buildings the iconic treatment Andy Warhol reserved for celebrities. He started about a decade ago, with buildings whose history and names -- Normandie, El Miramar, La Concha -- alluded to his country's colonial past.

Back then, seductively textured images were crisp and easily identifiable. The new paintings are a lot more abstract. Densely layered oil paint obliterates the buildings' solid structure, leaving behind only ghostly silhouettes. Perez's former tropical palette has given way to pastels.

The show also introduces Perez's first sculptures, inspired by his collection of swizzle sticks, many from the hotels he paints. The tiny trivia are cast on a much larger scale -- one piece is more than 6 feet tall.

The lanky, knobby formations -- some bronze, others plaster -- also look abstract and figurative at once, alluding to Giacometti and Twombly.

dwell

Enoc Perez: The Andy Warhol of Architecture

January 16, 2013
Mark Bynes, writer

Painter Enoc Perez grew up in Puerto Rico, a place rich with modernist buildings in places like La Concha and the Hix Island House. His move to New York amplified an admiration for the style. There, he pursued a career painting modernism landmarks while surrounded by icons like Gordon Bunshaft's Lever House and Eero Saarinen's TWA Terminal. His style has a pop art quality to it. Perez uses photos and images from postcards and magazines in his designs, often combining them with primitive print-making techniques. His newest work is a panorama of the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C., currently on display at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. It's a nostalgia trip of sorts, with Perez utilizing a painting process similar to Andy Warhol.



Where did your fascination with modernism come from?

I have always been an architecture groupie. Growing up in Puerto Rico, one of the things I remember most was going to the hotels on the island and how great it felt to be in them. As a grown-up, I realized that a big part of that feeling was caused by the architecture of these buildings—grand lobbies, beautiful pools, curved lines. This architecture was "Modern." It gave me ambition.

Are there specific cities you've lived in or traveled to that helped bring out this fascination?

Yes, because almost every city has something great to look at. And if there is not, there are always a beautiful woman to look at.

How much does nostalgia play in your architecture paintings?

I don't know if nostalgia crosses my mind, maybe it's just a by-product of the subject. I come to the buildings out of admiration.



Your painting style seems to reflect the same era as the buildings you use. Is your method intended to parallel the subject?

My method came out of a preoccupation with creating paintings that would make sense historically (at least in my mind) with New York painting. When I started to paint in New York, and still today, I felt that Andy Warhol's paintings were important to artists in New York. So I thought that if I somehow used printmaking in my process, I could have some sort of relationship with history. Then I started to make these drawings and would transfer them to canvas by adding oil paint on the back and then redrawing them on to the canvas, kind of like carbon paper—a printmaking process that I still use today. One of the interesting things about the method is that when layered enough, it produces a sense of decay, like real life. In a way, it contradicts the sense of optimism that the buildings embody. Or my own sense of optimism, even. Maybe making paintings today comes through as an act of optimism since painting has been declared dead almost every year for decades. And that desire to move forward with it may parallel the aspirations of this type of architecture.

The scale of your Watergate mural takes up the walls of a small, round room inside the Corcoran currently. What about the complex inspired the scale?

The Watergate murals are the biggest paintings I have done to this day. I wanted the paintings to become an experience. They had to be large and the palette had to be black, white, and gray, because this is a building that has a particular significance to our history. The inside of the buildings are curved so it made perfect sense for a rotunda, especially in Washington, D.C.

You once did a painting of the Hearst Building (a glass tower done by Norman Foster in 2006). That seems to be a departure from your typical subjects. Why that building?

The Hearst Tower is a great building. And as a contemporary building I think that it embodies a sense of possibility and a sense of American aspiration just like the other buildings I like, even if the architect is British. I'm not an architecture scholar; to me it's just about love.

Enoc Perez's Utopia is at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. through February 10, 2013. All images courtesy the artist.

Art in America

Enoc Perez in 3D

January 11, 2013

Brian Boucher, writer

The artist who was long known as the painter who didn't use a brush is now the painter who sculpts.



"The Good Days," Enoc Perez's second solo exhibition at New York's Acquavella Galleries (Jan. 10-Feb. 9), includes the painter's first foray into sculpture. The Puerto Rican-born artist, now 45, lives in New York, and is best known for his paintings of buildings.

"I've had a secret studio on Long Island where I've been sculpting for five years," Perez told *A.i.A.* in a conspiratorial tone at a preview of the show yesterday. "It's just recently that the sculptures started to make sense."

As they have for years, Modernist-era Caribbean hotels continue to command Perez's attention, and they form the subject of both the canvases and the sculptures in the Acquavella show.

"I'm an architecture groupie," the artist said. "So this is my version of painting Hollywood stars." (Also currently on view is his exhibition "Utopia" at the Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D.C., through Feb. 10, with paintings of the Marina Towers in Chicago and of D.C.'s Watergate Hotel.)

PETER BLUM GALLERY

His 2011 show at Acquavella saw him picking up the brush for the first time in some 17 years. His process had involved applying pigment to sheets of paper using an oil stick, then placing the paper against the canvases and applying pressure to transfer the pigment, and he still works this way.

In a 2009 interview, he described this process as his way of dealing with the legacy of Warhol's printmaking. But he's added the brush to his toolkit. "I was known for making pictures without a brush," Perez said. "And who gives a shit about that?!"

The paintings of Caribbean hotels refer, among other things, to colonialism, via the names affixed to them, like the Normandie, the Pierre and the Mandarin. The modernist architecture, as per the title of his Corcoran show, recalls utopian dreams. In the new paintings, the architecture that Perez used to reproduce in loving detail is practically vanishing into abstraction. "Colonialism was not exactly a success," he deadpans.

There's also a love story behind the artist's first portrait of a Caribbean hotel, from a decade ago. He had fallen for a French woman, who was at the time married to another man. So he started by painting San Juan's Normandie Hotel. "It's designed by a Puerto Rican architect, and has a French name, so it was a secret love letter." The French woman is now his wife, and mother to their five-year-old son.

The sculptures grew out of the artist's extensive collection of swizzle sticks—which, it so happens, were invented in the West Indies, Perez says—many of them from the same hotels that appear in the paintings. Like his earlier depictions of Puerto Rican rum bottles, they have elements of boozy self-portraiture. "I used to do a lot of drinking," the artist admitted.

He has the swizzle sticks scanned ("I use the same guy Jeff Koons uses—he's expensive but he really gets it right") and then assembles the sculptures out of multiple white plaster versions of the sticks.

They are gangly, messy, elongated works, mostly about 2 to 5 feet high and standing on wood or stone bases. They can recall Giacometti's elongated figures. The names of the hotels often appear in raised letters, and their logos frequently adorn the top of the sticks. A tiny, foreshortened Hotel Normandie rests at the peak of one seemingly top-heavy sculpture, and the female nudes that stand for Club La Red, Havana, are repeated along the full length of another, making it look like some kitschy fountain.

"They are a painter's sculptures, so I approach them via collage," Perez said, referring to his process of

PETER BLUM GALLERY

assembling the sticks into new forms. "And collage to me is a painterly process, not a sculptor's process," he added.

Among the painter-sculptors he admires are Picasso, Degas, Cy Twombly and Julian Schnabel. "And of course I was thinking of Schwitters too," he adds. Some of the structures are supported partly by wire, because he's admittedly no good at building self-sufficient structures: "I'm just a painter."

"But I really don't want to be a complacent figurative painter," Perez added, explaining his urge to challenge himself with a new medium. "If you're making complacent work, whether for the sake of theory or the market, deep down you're going to know it."



New York – Enoc Perez “The Good Days” at Acquavella Galleries, Through February 9, 2013

January 22, 2013

S. Lohrasbe, writer

Enoc Perez’s second solo exhibition at Acquavella Galleries marks the artist’s first foray into sculpture. Having developed a refined hand-printing technique on canvas (involving a laborious process of transferring pigment onto paper using a series of impressions), Perez now delves into three-dimensionality. Titled “The Good Days,” this exhibition marries the artist’s choice medium of brushless painting with sculpture, showing a strong progression for his oeuvre.

Perez is deeply influenced by his Puerto Rican roots. Referencing Modernist architecture of our 1950s and 60s, the artist re-imagines his childhood experiences with idyllic memory. He diffuses the sharp angles of buildings (his main subject matter) with delicate curvature and loose imprints, adding dashes and hints of color to a predominantly pale palette. Combined with the sterility of titanium white, the canvasses are covered in hues of sea foam green, light lemon yellow, and faded peach. Coupled with deconstructed bronze-cast swizzle sticks, the entire show insinuates innocence, nostalgia, and decay. Each individual work appears sturdy and ephemeral at the same time, together they are utterly beautiful.



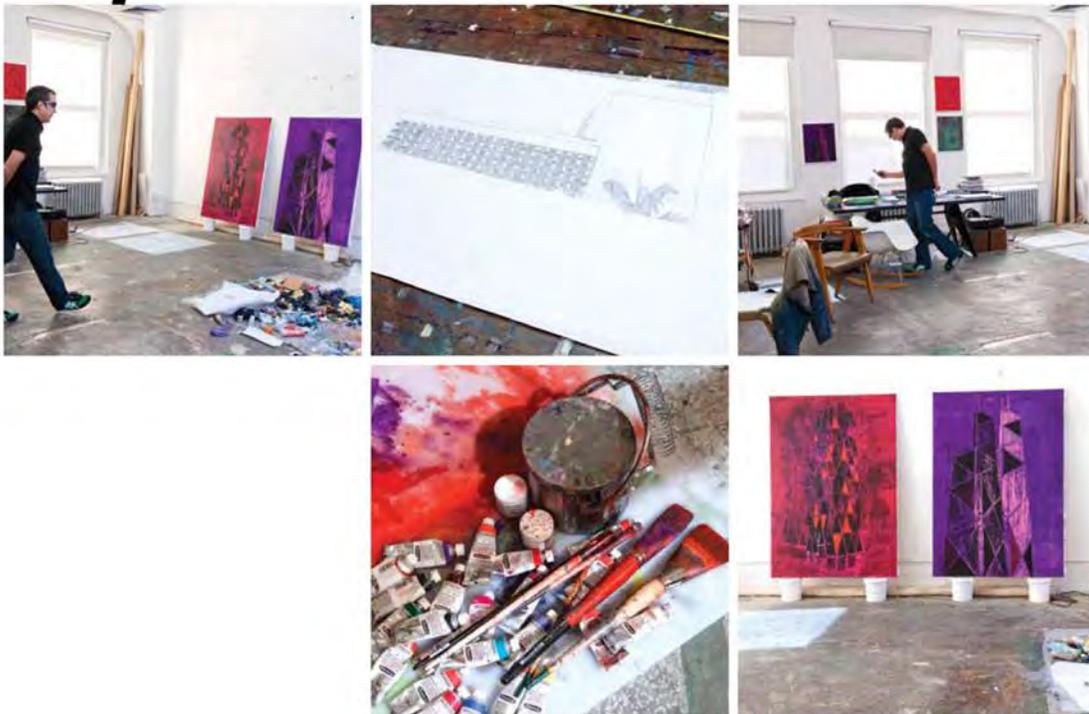
Enoc Perez, “The Good Days” (Installation View)

The artist’s hand remains evident in every medium he employs—a sort of self-portraiture. Compared to past work, these paintings resemble layered etchings with subtle rather than obvious structural references. They resemble the skeletons of old buildings. And the glossy hyper-elongated sculptures show many markings and twisted ends – monochromatic statuesque figurines à la Giacometti, only in white. Paired together, these two mediums create a dream-like escape with eerie undertones. Though themes like light versus dark and past versus future are undeniably cliché, Perez is able to play with them exhaustively in his work. He uses the duality of the subject matter to get his message across. Buildings, for instance, represent cultural ideals—their decay often indicates economic collapse and societal neglect. For Perez, the Modernist aesthetic is powerful. “The Good Days,” like the title suggests, pulls viewers back in time, seen through rose-colored glasses.

MODERN PAINTERS

Summer 2010

STUDIO VISIT / enoc pérez



The Rule Breaker

ENOC PEREZ PICKS UP A PAINTBRUSH.

ALEXANDER WOLF words BRAD HARRIS portraits



FROM TOP: Five views of Enoc Pérez's studio. *Bacardi Bottles* (silver/yellow), 2010. OIL ON CANVAS, 20 x 16 IN. Pérez. OPPOSITE, FROM LEFT: Four views of Pérez's studio. *Hearst Tower, NY*, 2009. OIL ON CANVAS, 80 x 60 IN.

FROM TOP FIVE IMAGES: BRAD HARRIS; GALLERY MICHAEL JANSSEN; BOTTOM: BRAD HARRIS

People like

Enoc Pérez's paintings. At his recent exhibitions in New York City—at Mitchell-Innes & Nash in 2006 and 2009 and in the lobby of the Lever House in 2007—gallerygoers could be seen contentedly gazing at canvases depicting his favorite buildings, nude studies, and still lifes. But viewers captivated by Pérez's seductive imagery might also be taken with the artist for an entirely different reason: his idiosyncratic, strictly brushless technique. Until recently Pérez had not picked up a paintbrush in 20 years. Instead, his custom had been to make a preparatory drawing on paper for each color to appear in the finished work, apply oil paint to the back of these sheets, and then hold them up to the canvas. At this point he traced over the sketches so that the paint stuck, effectively drawing the image onto the canvas.

I visit Pérez's studio, in a nondescript office building in midtown Manhattan. Outside the elevator on the seventh floor, one of several arrows scrawled on the wall promises ENOC PEREZ. Dozens of squeezed-out paint tubes are piled in a colorful pigment burial mound in the center of the studio, a raw white room furnished with only a few scattered chairs and the long desk where we sit together discussing his paintings. He announces that he has just bought several paintbrushes. "I've been doing paintings in the same manner for a while," he says. "You start proving certain things that you wanted to prove to yourself. So what's next?" His old procedure

is still evident in the canvases scattered around his studio, but most also betray the use of a brush. On one, the artist is in the process of portraying the façade of Norman Foster's Hearst Tower as a harlequin pattern of glass triangles in bright colors, applied with different types of brushwork. Another thus far consists only of a background of overlapping blue and yellow color fields. Pérez—a lean man with thick glasses and a thicker accent—gestures emphatically when discussing his work and chooses his words carefully. "The art I love most is art that challenges itself," he tells me. "You can always challenge a public. You can always do something obscene and shock people. But when you have a method that people like and then you turn it upside-down—now we're having fun."

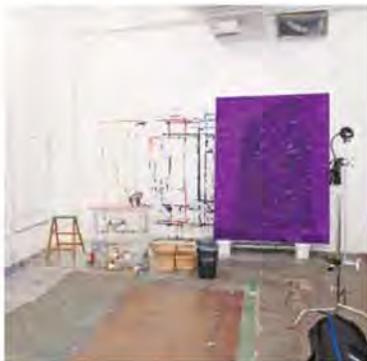
Pérez was born in 1967 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and grew up next door to a local painting academy, where he started lessons at age eight. His father, José, is an art critic. The regional tradition of printmaking is echoed in his pictures to this day, as are the rum bottles, palm trees, and beachfront resorts of his youth. Pérez traveled to New York in 1986 to study painting at the Pratt Institute, later earning his master's degree at Hunter College. "You react against what you're taught," he says, remembering the concept-based values of his professors. "Words like *romantic* or for a painting to be beautiful—not a good thing. So I wanted to make something really beautiful."

Pérez also remembers feeling the need to grapple with the methods of certain giants of New York painting. Tellingly, all the names he mentions in this regard—Jackson Pollock, Roy Lichtenstein, Jasper Johns, Andy Warhol—were similarly interested in alternative means of mark making. Looking around his studio, one sees that breaching his self-imposed boundaries has resulted in a deeper exploration not only of the many ways paint can be applied but also of the subjects he loves to portray. Of these one is by far the most prevalent.



FROM LEFT: FOUR IMAGES: BRAD WARE; GALLERY MICHAEL JANSSEN

STUDIO VISIT



CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT:
Three views of Pérez's studio. *Casa Malaparte (Night)*, 2008. OIL ON CANVAS, 7 3/4 x 12 FT. *Bacardi Bottles (silver/yellow)*, 2010. OIL ON CANVAS, 20 x 16 IN.

"Rum bottles are like self-portraits to me, a vehicle to do research," says Pérez. "There's something else that comes into play here that you can't necessarily control, but you have to allow for it to exist. It allows me to be true and maybe even develop new ways of making things." In fact it was while making a rum-bottle painting that he decided to pick up brushes again. A recent, mostly black painting conveys the images of two rum bottles and two glasses through their bare essentials: the silhouettes of the former and the rims of the latter rendered in hot pink, with a few passes of the brush in electric blue to add a new dimension. It's difficult to determine the sequence of color layers. You can barely make out the words *Light Dry* and *Dark Dry* near the top of each bottle.

The motif of light versus dark runs through Pérez's work of the past decade, particularly the pictures of buildings portrayed both by day and at night. The daytime ones are about the structures themselves, about finding character in architectural detail. Near the end of our visit, Pérez points to a bright painting of the Italian Rationalist architect Adalberto Libera's Casa Malaparte, on Capri, which the artist sees as "another character" in Jean-Luc Godard's 1963 film *Le mépris*. Looking at the small image, which Pérez made for himself, I wonder at how this thoroughly modern structure—with its horizontal, shiplike exterior—fits so unassumingly into the island's landscape.

It is in the night paintings, however, that Pérez reveals his emotions. "If demons are there, I tend



to express them in the palette," he says, pointing to a dark depiction of the same Capri house that he sees as "an image from hell." The painting demonstrates the power of his brushless technique: A succession of uneven vertical lines in the dark purple foliage surrounding the building were made by clawing at a piece of paper loaded with paint and pressed against the canvas. Now that the intermediary paper technique is only one of many possibilities, we can look forward to watching how Pérez continues to experiment within the boundaries of pleasant imagery, which he just might prove aren't boundaries at all. MP



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: THREE IMAGES; BRAD HARRIS; COLLEZIONE MARGARETTI; GALERIA MICHEL JANSSEN

Zingmagazine

INTERVIEW: Enoc Perez

May 2010

Brandon Johnson, interviewer



Enoc Perez first approached us with a project during lunch at Felix on a sunny day in Soho, New York. His project, "Form by Memory," is multimedia – with watercolors, digital photos, polaroids, sketches, photos of paintings in situ, and even drink stirrers from Puerto Rican hotels. A divergence from his architectural paintings created via brushless paint transfer, we enthusiastically accepted the project for zingmagazine #22 (due out later this year).

Interview by Brandon Johnson

ZING: What is it about architecture that interests you? Why use it as a subject for paintings?

Enoc Perez: I see buildings as metaphors, as abstractions. I like how architecture can embody ideas, "the future", progress, enlightenment, optimism, etc. In fact it can project ideas in any direction. To paint architecture is to paint ideas. It is to paint an abstract reflection of current society.

ZING: Do certain architectural styles appeal to you more than others?

PETER BLUM GALLERY

EP: Sure I like some architecture more than others but I find that there is a lot to like. Generally I like everything from Greek Architecture to Bauhaus, Modern, International Style, Mid-Century Modern, Brutalist to Green Building. I follow my attraction, my taste is a bit promiscuous.

ZING: You've mentioned that there's a utopian quality to your work – a belief in painting as opposed to questioning the medium. What, in your opinion, is the place of belief in art?

EP: Belief is to me important in art. And I mean to believe in art. A significant part of the existence of art has to do with the artist believing in his or her art and those whom believe in the artist work. People believing in art is part of what brings art to life. My friend Tony Shafrazi once told me that art was "his religion". I think that comment goes to the heart of what I am trying to address here. It is the trust that art can make a difference, change or improve our perception of ourselves; the trust that art is important.

ZING: Does belief extend to the viewer of art?

EP: Of course, it is central for the viewer to be in it. It is a connection that completes the process.

ZING: I've been a fan since you first proposed your project over a lunch in Soho. The multi-media project seems to showcase a process rather than a product. Is this a glimpse into your painting process?

EP: I remember the lunch and yes this project is about some aspects of my painting process. I was just giving some physicality to my thought process. When it comes to my work, I am as excited about the process as I am about the finished idea.

ZING: The drink stirrers are a great touch – they add tactile detail to the art deco modernist style you are surveying. Do you collect them?

EP: I have a beautiful collection of drink stirrers. From all over the world, I think that I have over a thousand. I love them.

ZING: You have a series of architectural monochromes upcoming at Galerie Michael Janssen during Berlin Gallery Week. Why monochrome?

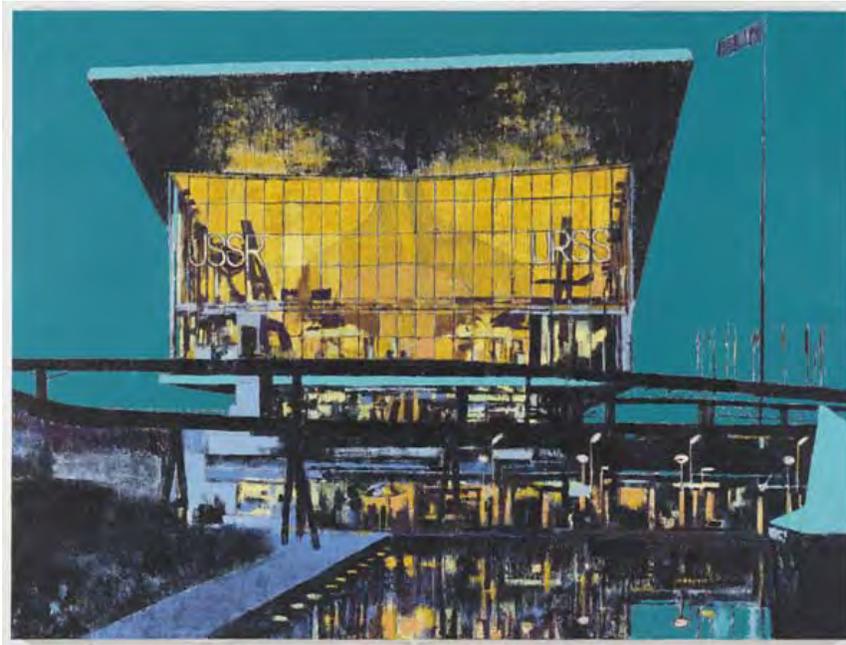
EP: I wanted to see what I could do with a very disciplined palette. I also felt that it was important to untangle my painting process, break every rule that I had set for myself. For years I did not use brushes in the making of my paintings, the new paintings are done with brushes. I like the new work, making it has been renewing. Sometimes you have to burn your own house in order to create something new.

ZING: Anything else you have coming up / are working on that we should know about?

EP: Next year I have an exhibition in a museum in Murcia Spain called "The Cannery". I also have gallery shows in Europe and in NY.

Enoc Perez at Mitchell-Innes & Nash

September 21, 2009
Hilarie Sheets, writer



Enoc Perez, Pavilion of the Soviet Union, Expo 67 2009.
Oil on canvas. 60 by 80 inches. Courtesy the Artist and Mitchell-Innes & Nash

In this unabashedly gorgeous show, Enoc Perez uses the contours of modernist architecture and feminine beauty to explore ideas of longing, nostalgia, optimism and melancholy. These large-scale canvases faithfully reproduce the dynamic forms of utopian buildings such as the Palacio da Justica, Brasilia, and the Nakagin Capsule Tower, Tokyo, or the nude torso of a woman, yet the unnatural palette—by turns high-keyed, brooding, and shimmering—pushes the emotional content and abstraction further than in the artist's previous paintings.

The San Juan-born, New York-based artist continues to construct his paintings without using a brush. Working from reproductions and photographs he's taken, Perez makes multiple identical drawings with the aid of a projector and transfers each individual color to canvas via oil stick on the back of the drawings in a process akin to color printing. While this painstaking method of building images layer by layer can produce

PETER BLUM GALLERY

grainy results, typical of his earlier paintings, here Perez experimented as well with broad swaths of thickly applied pigment.

In “Alma Bank, Georgia,” for instance, the futuristic-looking structure, crowned by two crossing arches, is rendered in a thin, streaky manner evocative of old color photographs from the 1960s. Yet the sky is a vivid, richly textured marigold yellow that seems to be enveloping the flying curves and dark foliage in the background—or is the black landscape eating into the unreal sky? The ravishing image, idealized yet wistful, feels plucked from memory.

The dramatic undulating façade in “Teatro Popular, Niteroi, Brasil” is even more removed from time and place. The pale pinkish-white ribbons of architecture, with a sketchy plaid of brown, blue, purple and yellow defining an indeterminate foreground area, are suspended in murky black space that heightens the pure sculptural voluptuousness of the subject. In another canvas nearby, Perez treats the sensuous architecture of a woman’s torso viewed naked from behind similarly. Her white skin tone, flecked with bits of pink, yellow, blue, purple, red and brown, seems illuminated against the black background. In his boldest move toward abstraction, Perez paints a solid deep purple biomorphic form running up her side from one buttock to the shoulder and down the arm and another purple ovoid shrouding her face peering over her shoulder. In both paintings, he captures the promise—of love, of a better tomorrow embodied in modernist projects—and its slippery unattainability.

The standout of the show is “Pavilion of the Soviet Union, Expo 67,” of an outward-oriented structure built for the future that Perez paints with a melancholic glamour. The glassed-in pavilion glows a fiery yellow that seems to give off heat under its soaring cantilevered roof and is cloaked with a saturated teal sky signaling dusk or the end to happiness. In the foreground reflecting pool, Perez paints an expressionistic tour de force of dazzling color and light, suggesting the artist is loosening the yoke of his painting method and enjoying the application of paint unhinged to representation.



Enoc Perez

September 15, 2009
Barbara Pollack, writer

Enoc Perez has had a love affair with utopian architecture ever since he captured the fading glamour of mid-century hotels in his native Puerto Rico. Now, after two decades of working in New York, he's expanded his vocabulary to include a global array of futuristic structures, depicted in jewel tones and indigo swatches that convey a sense of loss and nostalgia. Perez's subjects reflect a moment when architecture offered the promise of a brighter tomorrow, as in *Palacio de Justicia, Brasilia*, which depicts a rectangular structure with curvaceous arches designed by Oscar Niemeyer in 1956. Working from architectural renderings, photographs and color separations, Perez punctuates his canvas with a heavily applied patchwork of purples and blues to serve as shadows dancing across the facade of the modernist building. In another image, *Pavilion of the Soviet Union, Expo 67*, Perez nails the impressive sweep of what was one of the main draws at Montreal's World's Fair—a monument to a global power that would collapse 24 years later. Just in case you miss the romanticism of this enterprise, Perez adds human figures, matching them to the shapes and lines of the architecture. Nude turns the female form into a sensuous abstraction. *Lovers* depicts a man leaning over a reclining woman, a scene stolen from a vintage Salem cigarette ad. The exhibit continues Perez's investigation of painting as a kind of time machine, but thanks to his increasingly sophisticated surfaces, it also shows the artist moving forward, making literate works that formally grab our attention.



Nakagin Capsule Tower, Tokyo;
Photographs: Courtesy the Artist

Interview

Enoc Perez

December 2008
David Coggins, writer



In Enoc Pérez's paintings of modernist buildings, rum bottles, and provocative nudes, the intensity of his attraction to his subject is so evident that one becomes complicit in his nostalgia trip almost immediately. Last year, in an inspired convergence of art and geography, the 42-year-old's series of paintings of the Lever House in New York City appeared in the lobby of that very building. But when he's not showing in architectural landmarks, Pérez's work can be found in New York at Mitchell-Innes & Nash and in London at Faggionato Fine Art. The paintings in his current series, based on Eero Saarinen's TWA terminal at New York's JFK Airport, are his largest yet.

DAVID COGGINS: What is your relationship to the buildings that you paint?

ENOC PÉREZ: It's a matter of attraction-attraction to the building, to the object, to what I'm going to paint. In terms of architecture, I see buildings as ready-mades, in the Duchampian sense. I see them as metaphors, and I respond to metaphors almost physically-I know whether a building is something I want to use pretty much immediately.

DC: How is that different from the nudes you paint?

EP: The paintings of buildings are portraits, too.

DC: Are they like portraits in the sense that you get to know them more after you've spent time painting them?

EP: I try to get a likeness of them, so there's definitely an element of portraiture. There should always be a bearing or a relationship to the object or person being portrayed, and I try to be loyal to the architecture. Part of the selection process is the love for the building.

DC: You build an image with a physical history. Your painting process is not unlike printmaking. You don't actually touch the canvas with a brush.

EP: The reason I came up with this unique process is, when I moved to New York in 1986, I thought, If I'm making paintings in this city I would like the work to have a relationship with the masters of this city- somehow it has to make sense within the tradition of the city. For my money, the work of Andy Warhol is hard to ignore, and he used the process of silkscreening in his paintings. I thought that my work should have a relationship to printmaking, and so through trial and error I found a way that suits my needs.

DC: For somebody who likes Andy Warhol, there is a nostalgic quality to your work. You were born in Puerto Rico-how do you feel about nostalgia?

EP: I've been here 22 years. After a while you become a New Yorker. I love Puerto Rico, and we have a lot of hotels there that are modernist buildings, and that's probably where the love of this specific type of architecture comes from. In a way, these architects really believed in the idea of utopia. There's a true sense of believing in these buildings, and if you look at contemporary architecture, that's not as much the case. The fact that they're from a different era makes them nostalgic. I love painting, and I believe in painting, and I share that with these architects who believed in utopia. A lot of painters paint to question the medium, which might be perfect for them, but I'm one of those who really believes in painting.