

Richard Gins Artist Statement

I have been working as an artist in Red Hook Brooklyn for the past 30 years. My life long interest in philosophy, religion, esoteric knowledge and the advances in physics have given me many powerful ideas about reality to ponder. The struggle to “wake-up” from mechanicality and (through inner work) into a more conscious human being has been a life long aspiration and this content has become a subject in my work. The content of many of my paintings is about the creative process itself. My paintings come to me, unannounced and demanding, fragile and fleeting and through great struggle. My work as an artist is to overcome the equal resistance and remove the obstacles in the way of receiving it. The images in this exhibition exist because I believe a higher consciousness requires great learning, proper knowledge, and a will to start and commit to this life-long process.

In 1974 I made a spontaneous drawing with rectangular shapes imposing their will on the figure. I knew immediately that this very simple image was profound and important. I called these geometric shapes “obstructions”, and I began to explore all of their implications and associations. “I could see the strong interplay between rigid shapes and the fluid organic lines of the squeezed figure as having great potential to express on a formal level”, many of the ideas I was working with. I related these new visual devices to the work of Francis Bacon.

Over the years the “obstructions” transformed from being positive solid shapes into negative spaces, where their ability to exert force was sacrificed into new spatial concerns, a new juxtaposition of inner and outer; of fragmentation, of parallel universes, worm holes and windows revealing pieces of an inner hidden world. New significance and meaning were surfacing in the paintings.

The figures were now being broken down into smaller parts, to a quantum level? The shapes are now cut out of the picture plane, creating opportunities to play with the tension between the surface and the interior space, between the parts of the figure and the whole. Some of these paintings create a kind of virtual reality by the viewer activating the empty space by interpreting how these fragmented figures complete themselves within the hidden regions of the paintings. This process has evolved into other kinds of images too.

The figures are trapped and isolated. But much like the freedom and inventiveness of Picasso’s figures where he removes body parts and reassembles them within a multiple perspective, my work reinvents the figures as a direct result of cause and effect, the result of powerful directional

force, binding limitation and gravity, stretching, squeezing and pulling the figure.

For me the creative process is not a simple linear process but more like a web; or roots; or like the Internet, where everything is connected yet finding these connections is a journey of tangled threads, interconnections and surprises. Many themes and ideas manifest over time but not necessarily sequentially. I've had to accept that many different ideas and sensibilities will flow into my work and on their own timetable. I am on an unpredictable journey compelled to not know where I am going or what the outcome will be before I start. Living this way has taught me "faith", as there are no guarantees or security in my life.

My work is provocative, instinctive, unique and layered with meaning...technique and CONTENT.