

# MOVE IN TIME

Sculpture paintings that shimmer, shift and change infinitely. Totally relative to the viewer's physicality. Space age, yet somehow nostalgic. One could easily assume they are digital. A big screen on a wall juiced up with power. But they are closer to a magic trick. Your mind is taking shortcuts, tranced in a state of perspective illusion. The sculptures look like moving works but are in fact a static assemblage of coloured poles, bent in very specific places and precisely put together. Interweaving at the same time are dramatic oil paintings sensitive to MAGMA's unique architecture. Frameless, chunky and painted around the canvas parameters. Gradients push and pull, dragging the eye all over. They are resolved but never allow the viewer to settle. And a mural installation that transports viewers into a new atmosphere, enhancing movement throughout the full exhibition setting. Drez is ever expansive, stress testing his known parameters of colour, space, immersion and historical reference into ambitious new formats.

Gestalt Chroma, the exhibition title, draws from a perceptual theory that emphasises the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. When you look at the totality of the wall sculptures for example, an illusion known as the moiré effect is at play. The perception of movement is caused by the interference of light by layered networks of lines. It happens whenever a repetitive structure, such as mesh, is overlaid with another similar structure. This is an alluring direction to take for an experimental artist like Drez, who is constantly pushing his practice to maximise immersion, wonderment and feeling. In a short space of time, we have seen Drez transcend all matter of form, crossing between giant outdoor murals, architectural dwellings, hanging sculptures, traditional canvas paintings, automotive and now fabricated steel wall sculptures. The variation in form is increasing, but unifying the work is his innate sense of colour and sensitivity to space. Drez is an artist who rejects being tied down to a single body of work. In fact, he is a bold risk-taking artist who is driven by discovery and making stand-out pieces that transcend historical frameworks like modernism and optical art, all the while adding his own individual virtuoso. We can expect increasingly experimental bodies of works like these sculptures to continue from Drez and the promise he has shown continually is to always push for more. More interaction, more scale, more flow, more harmony, more impact.

Public space is where this development began and his work needs to be discussed in relation to this. Drez is an artist who bridges the worlds of street art with contemporary art. A marriage that can create a lasting cultural impact for a city like Melbourne which already has a well documented street art and contemporary art heritage. Traditionally these worlds are divided, despite their overlap, and a conversation is happening with an artist like Drez who flows between both universes. Drez firmly believes in the need for public art to enrich the everyday. His background in graffiti, as well as music, has taught him about the power of public art as a catalyst for change and the importance

of communal experience. In graffiti, even as a young person, Drez learnt it is possible to have a significant effect on the world around you. This assurance is something that carries through to his contemporary practice in both art and music. Drez is in fact a professional musician (keys) on top of being a painter. His sense of colour and harmony is perhaps reflective of this musical background. But tying it all together is Drez's force to enrich the public imagination. The sheer scale and effect of many of his murals have captivated whole communities. Drez is an individual who rightfully believes that art is for everyone because its capacity to inspire and bring life and colour into the world is worthwhile. Public art forces a non-discriminative creative exchange from the highest to the lowest houses. It is inclusive of all race, religion and sex. Public art can turn switches on for the young and old and create lasting curiosities throughout people's lives.

Creating this kind of impact happens through intention and filling the works with emotionality. The chromatic oscillation paintings presented in this exhibition formally play with the properties of colours for example. The subtlety in shifting tonalities can look easy to execute, but the reality of making them feel emotive is quite the opposite. Infinite colours exist. Landing on combinations that create magical harmony and trigger emotion is something Drez is gifted at doing. The more colours that are included, the more complicated the works are to resolve. And if the final result is for the viewer to feel something, how is this achieved? This is one of the true testaments of good abstraction. A great abstract artist can conjure works that penetrate into sentiments that are deeply felt, but not necessarily possible to articulate. The beauty in some of these works aligns with these sentiments. Something is simply felt in the presence of them, rather than rationalised. Feeling paintings don't have recipes. You can't create truly emotive artwork from a recipe. You have to feel it. Drez notes:

“ In painting, you have to show the human touch for emotive connection. There needs to be feeling in the paint.”

It's mysterious how this happens, but humanity is definitely part of it. On a micro level within these paintings, it is possible to follow the brush marks. To track how Drez moved with them like a memory and get closer to his personal sentiments at the time. The deliberate imperfections are the spice left on the canvas to show the human element. This is also the way his large scale murals deviate away from feeling like giant advertisements produced by graphic designers, towards cherished emotive centrepieces. There is nothing perfectly straight in these seemingly geometric artworks. Chance is accepted. Precision is increasingly forfeited. Humanity is amplified in this process.

The sculptures on the other hand capture emotion in a different way. Because of their requirement for precision, the chance of happy accidents like in the paintings is reduced. At the same time, there is no way for them to be

computer perfect. That control is lost. So emotion in these works comes from the dance viewers enter when they engage with them. The works are in a constant state of change depending on light, viewing position and the space

that surrounds them. They are infinite in this respect, never appearing the same in any two scenarios. The works offer an intrinsically personal experience with something that is constantly in flux. This idea of change is also the conceptual underpinning of them. The interaction forces you as a person to affect the space and the world around you. Drez writes:

“ The ability to affect change and create the environment we wish to live in comes from an internal recognition of our abilities to make action. These works force an interaction of control over ones perceived environment, encouraging introspection in our ability to affect public and private change.”

Drez, reminds us all in his artist statement, change is in our control. Everyone is active. And action is what anything worthwhile requires. It's an intrinsically personal experience to enjoy these sculptures. The interaction forces you as a person to influence the space and the world around you. It's like watching a video, but you are in control. Likewise, the paintings and mural installation cause interaction and movements as the viewer flows through the shifting hues. And the most exciting part about Drez perhaps, is that it is only the beginning. We are at the tip of the iceberg. There is a gravitational pull to his ideas and a lustre for creation felt deep within him. He will continue to push ideas to their limits. To defeat whichever space he occupies. For this landmark exhibition, Gestalt Chroma, agency is in the hands of all participants. Drez's artist statement calls for agency and action. The opposite, assumed as waste, is a potent message for us all. And he would like these radical sculpture paintings to symbolise that. Because with them, you are in charge. You create the change you want to see.

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