



Geoffrey Stein: A studio practice in transition

For the last seven years, at the New York Studio School, American University in Washington, DC and the Slade School of Fine Art, London, Geoffrey Stein's studio practice has focused on painting people and objects from observation. While working with models, his goal has been to put one brush stroke of paint next to another on the canvas, enhancing close tonal, temperature and colour changes to achieve not an academic likeness or a copy, but rather an image that reveals the process of painting and communicates something about the person being painted.

Through this examination of process, Stein has started reevaluating his studio practice to the point where it has reached a

transitional moment. The artist's approach to painting includes making drawings and collages, and more recently, he has introduced photography to his studio work. By looking closely at the photographs he takes at the end of each painting session, Stein has been examining the distinction between the process of documentation and that of painting. By adding a time-based aspect to his practice, he seeks to explore the temporal element in his paintings, a process that he intends to pursue in the future.

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Designed by Katherine E. Bash



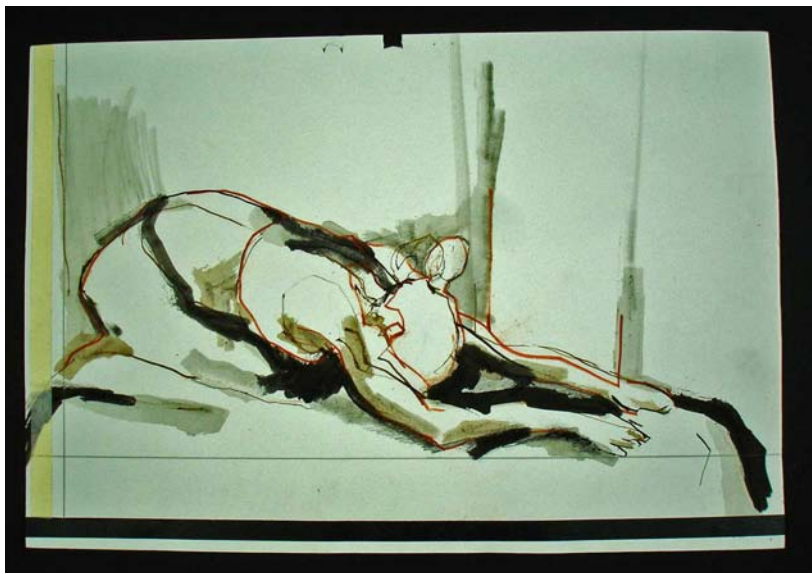
Working Process: Drawings & Collages by Geoffrey Stein



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Defining Working Process

The desk in Geoffrey Stein's studio is the place where life meets art: a cup of coffee, jars of paint and ink, Polaroids of a friend, an invitation to a Julian Schnabel show, airline tags, a notebook, a bus route map, an issue of *Frieze* magazine, rulers, empty coffee cups, a drawing in progress, and a mirror with Stein's reflection photographing himself for a self portrait. For Stein, the artist studio becomes the place where the reality of everyday life is mixed with ink and paint and turned into art. The working process through which Stein arrives to his large scale painted canvases begins with studies that take the form of drawings and collages, smaller scale works where first observations meet with experimentation, and where colour, line and found materials share the same paper surface.

Stein's main area of investigation in painting is studio-based portraiture, working with models over extended periods of time. It is a practice where the temporal aspect of painting-making becomes central to

the artist's exploration of the medium of portraiture. The organic evolution of his painting can be witnessed in some of the working drawings, where the contours of bodies and faces shift, where poses are altered and details reworked. But not all drawings are studies for paintings, and some remain individual works capturing a shorter-lived preoccupation of the artist. In these works, a somber side of Stein is revealed, where the anxieties and ruminations of the everyday emerge.

Elements of Stein's daily life become even more visible in his collages where 'found materials' and newspaper clippings are inserted into the texture of works. Stein refers to his collage-making as "drawing with the knife" and is fascinated by its randomness and associative juxtapositions. It is within these collages that an emotional connection with the world is revealed. It is also through this medium that the artist explores new formats, such as landscape, and new visual vocabulary of a more abstract nature. There is a visible connection between experimentation with col-

lages and Stein's large scale canvases where newspaper cuttings have been added to the surface in some of the more recent works. Once again, the evolving temporality of the working process is revealed when on close examination details of a particular moment on time emerge for the viewer.

Geoffrey Stein's works on paper prove that observing and rendering the world around him visible to others involves hard work and perseverance, qualities that the artist has refined over time. Making art takes time, and time plays an important role in Stein's practice, where with each brushstroke and each line artwork is created in an unceasing process.

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