

Mark Pack Artist Statement

“Growing” is the word that best describes my primary concern while painting. Growth happens in all living things. If something grows, it is not made. To “make” a painting is to not make art, but if one lets that painting grow, then art is made. The difference being that the former is only made by the maker and reflects only the maker’s mind. The latter allows for its own making and thus develops a mind of its own.

I begin a painting in two different ways. The first is to put paint in a very direct manner in places that feel, momentarily, correct. If I find that those areas are not right then I will either go back over them with more paint or sand my original marks away, or maybe even spray the area with some water. The second beginning would be to make some kind of an uncontrolled mark on the surface by pouring paints or by using water and ink. After starting a “growing” painting, I go back into it and add more calculated elements that harmonize with the other layers of paint, while still concentrating on not rupturing the pattern of growth that was started. It is important that every mark that I make follows the “mind” of the mark made before it so that the train of thought is not broken. I do this to show a connection between the more controlled and the uncontrolled. Most people would interpret this process to be about the act of painting. I paint to give life to what I feel to be the truths about life. As Brice Marden would say, “The rectangle, the plane, the structure, the picture are but sounding boards for a spirit.”¹ I am also painting about paint but not as an end in itself. While painting about the properties of paint, I am thinking of how these properties relate to life.

¹ John Yau, “Drawing a New Line.” [Art on Paper](#) January/February 2004