

KASPER CONTEMPORARY

CHRISTOPHER RICO



Epistrophy I

2022, Acrylic on Yupo paper
7.5 x 15 in / 19 x 38 cm (paper size)
22.75 x 22.75 in / 58 x 58 cm (framed)
\$ 1,600

www.KasperContemporary.com

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Epistrophy II

2022, Acrylic on Yupo paper

7.5 x 15 in / 19 x 38 cm (paper size)

22.75 x 22.75 in / 58 x 58 cm (framed)

\$ 1,600

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Five Spot Blues

2022, Acrylic on Yupo paper

7.5 x 15 in / 19 x 38 cm (paper size)

22.75 x 22.75 in / 58 x 58 cm (framed)

\$ 1,600

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Light Blue

2022, Acrylic on Yupo paper
7.5 x 15 in / 19 x 38 cm (paper size)
22.75 x 22.75 in / 58 x 58 cm (framed)
\$ 1,600

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Red (Off Minor)

2022, Acrylic on Yupo paper
7.5 x 15 in / 19 x 38 cm (paper size)
22.75 x 22.75 in / 58 x 58 cm (framed)
\$ 1,600

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Study for Bright Mississippi
2022, Acrylic on Yupo paper
7.5 x 15 in / 19 x 38 cm (paper size)
22.75 x 22.75 in / 58 x 58 cm (framed)
\$ 1,600

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“Monk” installation

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Over the course of the pandemic, artist Christopher Rico did what many of the great jazz musicians do, he 'shedded'; He locked himself away and practiced his gestures and mark-making for days on end in isolation. During that time, he listened to a lot of jazz music, particularly the work of Thelonious Monk, to whom he dedicates his latest painting series, "Monk."

Music, perhaps the most abstract of all art forms, relies on rhythm and time as foundational elements of composition, and what Monk did was to free himself from the traditional constraints of what was considered music. Monk's compositions detach rhythm and time in ways that spoke to Rico visually, and very much of the moment of history we have lived through. Rico began to see the physical act of painting as musical forms, with harmony and tempo, structures that could be played against one another in interesting ways.

The work in "Monk" explores the absence of line, utilizing reflection and light as medium to unify an apparent binary. What is left is a continuum of visual expression, seemingly bifurcated by Newmanesque "zips" but in actuality unified by them. It has been long accepted that colors have tonality and bring about associations deep within our consciousness. Like the jazz greats before, it is the spaces between the "notes" that Rico chooses not to play that convey their own meaningfulness and significance.

The works on yupo paper (a synthetic paper from Japan) are repetitive, seemingly spontaneous, and immediate. They are a chance to explore color theory but are also a meditative daily practice of scales and changes. If one listens closely, there are audible resonances to the color combinations and loose but intentional gestures.

Improvisation, as we know from music, is earned. It is based on years of practice and dedication to understanding one's instrument. Likewise, gestural abstraction is an earned practice of expression rooted in understanding the rules and knowing how to break them. Picasso famously said that it takes a very long time to become young; our way back to the freedom and inhibition of childhood mark-making is an arduous path not to be traveled lightly. As adults, we have to peel back layers upon layers of judgment and self-criticism to liberate ourselves again. Rico sees this body of work as his first step to learning to run free with abandon, but with all the knowledge of half a lifetime behind it.

Christopher Rico is an American abstract painter living and working in South Carolina. He received his Masters of Arts from Clemson University. Rico has exhibited internationally in Australia, England and Germany, in regional art museums in South Carolina as well as commercial galleries in New York City, Atlanta, and New Orleans.

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EDUCATION

- 2016 Master of Arts, Clemson University, Clemson, SC
- 1995 Bachelor of Arts, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 Monk, Kasper Contemporary, NY
- 2021 Lotan, Kasper Contemporary, NY
- 2020 Everything that was Forever, Elizabeth Stone Harper Gallery, Clinton, SC
- 2020 Oblations and Meditations, Lyons Wier Gallery, New York, NY
- 2017 Via Dolorosa, Narthex Gallery, New York, NY
- 2016 That was yesterday, that day, Coldwell Banker Caine Gallery, Greenville, SC
- 2009 St. Theresa and small paintings, Art & Light Gallery, Greenville, SC
- 2000 40 Days, Levy Gallery, Memphis, TN
- 1999 State of the Union, Main Street Gallery, Memphis, TN
- 1998 Scatterings of Us, Theatreworks Atrium Gallery, Memphis, TN
- 1998 enemy:me, Memphis Edge Gallery, Memphis, TN

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2020 Hamptons Virtual Art Fair, Southampton, NY
- 2020 Chrysalistasis, Lyons Wier Gallery, New York, NY
- 2020 Art Goes Viral, Metropolitan Arts Council, Greenville, SC
- 2020 Gray/Grey (Matters), Divisible, Dayton, OH
- 2019 Bloom: Color, Caress and Seduction, Bill Lowe Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 2019 Hurt, M. David & Co., Brooklyn, NY
- 2018 Elizabeth Stone Harper Gallery, Clinton, SC
- 2018 Art Academy of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH
- 2017 Drift Greenville, Greenville, SC
- 2017 Greenville Center for the Creative Arts, Greenville, SC
- 2017 Ox-Bow School of Art, Saugatuck, MI
- 2017 Raygun Projects, Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia
- 2017 Elizabeth Stone Harper Gallery, Clinton, SC
- 2017 NIAD Art Center, Richmond, CA
- 2017 University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA
- 2017 Volunteer State Community College, Nashville, TN
- 2017 Apothecary, Chattanooga, TN
- 2016 No Dead Artists, Jonathan Ferrara Gallery, New Orleans, LA
- 2016 Class Room, Coventry, England
- 2016 Elgin Community College, Elgin, Illinois

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2016 Angelika Studios, High Wycombe, England
2016 Boecker Contemporary, Heidelberg, Germany
2016 Corridor/divisible, Dayton, OH
2015 Lyons Wier Gallery, New York, NY
2015 Artisphere, Artists of the Upstate exhibition, Greenville, SC
2014 Spartanburg Museum of Art, Spartanburg, SC
2013 Elizabeth Stone Harper Gallery, Clinton, SC
2013 ArtFields (inaugural year), Lake City, SC
2012 Art & Light Gallery, Greenville, SC
2010 Upstate Visual Art Fall Juried Show, Greenville, SC
2010 A little help from my friends, Los Angeles, CA
2008 Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, SC
2008 Festival of Flowers, Greenwood, SC
2007 Festival of Flowers, Greenwood, SC
2005 Elizabeth Stone Harper Gallery, Clinton, SC
2003 Studio 1030-G, Atlanta, GA
2002 Studio 1030-G, Atlanta, GA
2002 Elizabeth Stone Harper Gallery, Clinton, SC
2001 Red Shack Gallery, Seattle, WA
2000 ArtFarm!, Marshall Arts, Memphis TN

CORPORATE/PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Polsinelli, Kansas City, MO
Presbyterian College, Clinton, SC
LeMoyne-Owen College, Memphis, TN
Waddell & Associates, Memphis, TN

PUBLICATIONS & AWARDS

Dwain Skinner Open Studios Fellow, Greenville Metropolitan Arts Council, 2020
Ward, Charlotte. "Sacred Space." TOWN Magazine, Sept. 2020, pp. 38–37. Community Journals
Harrison, Tasha (2020). "Ritual Work". At Home Summer 2020. Greenville, South Carolina:
Community Journals, LLC.
Landi, Ann (2018); The Value of an MFA; Vasari21.com
Landi, Ann (2018); Under the Radar; Vasari21.com
Stowe, S. Andrew, and Christopher Rico. "Write Your Title: An Experimental Conversation
Concerning Arts. Methods and Some More." EXQUISITE CORPSE: Studio Art-Based Writing
Practices in the Academy, PARLOR PRESS, 2019.
Bookhardt, E.D. (2016) '20th Annual NO DEAD ARTISTS Essay', Inside NOLA.
Gould, R. (2015) Decoding the abstract | 'unlimited potential' at Lyons Wier Gallery.
Rico, C. (2009) The Forest and the Sea. 1st edn. United States: Blurb, Inc.