

NEW YORK – ENOC PÉREZ “THE GOOD DAYS” AT ACQUAVELLA GALLERIES, THROUGH FEBRUARY 9, 2013

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By Shireen Lohrasbe



Enoc Pérez, “The Good Days” (Installation View)



Enoc Pérez’s second solo exhibition at Acquavella Galleries marks the artist’s first foray into sculpture. Having developed a refined hand-printing technique on canvas (involving a laborious process of transferring pigment onto paper using a series of impressions), Pérez now delves into three-dimensionality. Titled “The Good Days,” this exhibition marries the artist’s choice medium of brush-less painting with sculpture, showing a strong progression for his oeuvre.

Pérez is deeply influenced by his Puerto Rican roots. Referencing Modernist architecture of the 1950s and 60s, the artist re-imagines his childhood experiences with idyllic memory. He diffuses the sharp angles of buildings (his main subject matter) with delicate curvature and loose imprints, adding dashes and hints of color to a predominantly pale palette. Combined with the sterility of titanium white, the canvasses are covered in hues of sea foam green, light lemon yellow, and faded peach. Coupled with deconstructed bronze-cast swizzle sticks, the entire show insinuates innocence, nostalgia, and decay. Each individual work appears sturdy and ephemeral at the same time, together they are utterly beautiful.

The artist’s hand remains evident in every medium he employs—a sort of self-portraiture. Compared to past work, these paintings resemble layered etchings with subtle rather than obvious structural references. They resemble the skeletons of old buildings. And the glossy hyper-elongated sculptures show many markings and twisted ends—monochromatic statuesque figurines à la Giacometti, only in white. Paired together, these two mediums create a dream-like escape with eerie undertones. Though themes like light versus dark and past versus future are undeniably cliché, Pérez is able to play with them exhaustively in his work. He uses the duality of the subject matter to get his message across. Buildings, for instance, represent cultural ideals—their decay often indicates economic collapse and societal neglect. For Pérez, the Modernist aesthetic is powerful. “The Good Days,” like the title suggests, pulls viewers back in time, seen through rose-colored glasses.

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