

Curator's note

Billy Merrell, Curatorial Director, Gallery 198 · Christo Allegra: *Everything* so far*

Short quote

“There's something of Impressionism in the flickering surfaces of Christo's paintings, where flowers, landscapes, and figures emerge and dissolve in a kind of psychic free fall. Learning to paint means learning to unsee, to become an instrument of light, a reporter of shapes rather than objects. MARCO takes this a step further, introducing another act of seeing between the artist and the world. Christo is interpreting an interpretation, improvising between machine, mind, and hand. And the paintings invite us to do something similar: to discover images for ourselves rather than simply be told what to see.”

— Billy Merrell, Curatorial Director, Gallery 198

On the paintings

“There's something of Impressionism in the restless, flickering surfaces of Christo's paintings, where networks of individual marks gather into flowers, landscapes, and figures. Some compositions have the layered quality of collage, with images overlapping and dissolving into one another. Despite the complexity of their construction, the paintings have an extraordinary immediacy, as though captured in a rush of perception. There's a kind of psychic free fall in looking at them: forms emerge, slip away, and partially resolve again in the viewer's imagination. They don't insist on what we should see, but invite us to discover it for ourselves.”

On MARCO and the act of seeing

“Learning to paint means learning to unsee: to forget the names and boundaries of objects and become instead an instrument of light, a reporter of shapes. MARCO takes this process a step further. By translating images into shifting regions of light and shadow, the software introduces another act of seeing between the artist and the world. Christo isn't simply interpreting what is seen, but interpreting an interpretation. The result is a kind of visual improvisation, a game of telephone between machine, mind, and hand, where unexpected images and associations can surface.”

About the exhibition

Bringing together a decade of work, *Everything* so far* offers an unusual meeting point between traditional painting and computational experimentation, inviting visitors to discover the expressive

possibilities of technology whether they're drawn to creative coding or simply to the pleasures of looking at paintings. The exhibition reflects Gallery 198's commitment to artist-led experimentation and direct public participation, extending the gallery's role from a place to encounter artwork into a space where visitors can help create it.