HYBRID SEMANTIX

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BY

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"I've always believed I could see things other people couldn't. Elements falling into space. A design. A shape in the chaos of things. I suppose I find these moments precious and reassuring because they take place outside of me, outside the silent grid, because they suggest an outer state that works somewhat the way my mind does but without the restlessness, the predetermined quality. I feel I'm safe from myself as long as there's an accidental pattern to observe in the physical world."

The Names—Don DeLillo

In a traditional art historical attitude one distinguishes between two main aspects of a work; its form and its content. Although these are often discussed in isolation from one another, there is somewhat general agreement that in good artworks, they are successfully fused together, and that it is merely the demands of language that require them to be distinguished in formal discussion. In this regard, semantics can be as corruptive and misleading as they can enlightening. The very thought of an artist's statement is—at the very least—of a suspicious nature. For if in fact the artist can fully define his/her work, I believe the work itself runs the likelihood of being rendered counterfeit. A work of art, like the dream construct, is a translation of our deepest inner necessities, a blind struggle to bring the visceral language of our most hidden heart into the light of form, regardless of whether the work is objective or nonobjective. It is dreaming while awake, and as such, impervious to the complete understanding of consciousness. Once the artist
has approximated a translation of the dreaming self into a fact of work, any attempt to consciously come to terms with it by formal explanation becomes nothing more than analytical groping.

Although the purpose of this thesis is an attempt to explore and support the formal, historical and technical aspects of the 6 multi-paneled paintings involved in the *Hybrid Semantix* exhibit (November 12-22, 2006) held at the University of Hawai’i at Manoa’s Commons Gallery, ultimately, the psychic narrative is left up to the viewer.
On Grid Structures and Levels of Meaning

The grid has been a major motif of Modern art, used both to explore the real and what is beyond and behind that reality. The historic origins and uses of the grid are tied as much to the physical reality of architecture as to the illusionist optics of painting, and within my paintings, the allusion to architecture, or at least spatial parameters, is quite obvious. During the Renaissance, the grid was the key to the invention of linear perspective, a conceptual tool by which painters could represent an abstract model of the world. Persisting through the 19th century as an essential instrument of pictorial representation, the Renaissance grid was a means of objective measurement of the real, and at the same time, in its pure optical geometry, a reflection of spiritual order and human "structure". In my paintings, the employment of semi-grids is not limited to one meaning, however, the breakdown of the grid system of logic could be one interpretation. In this way, the use of the fractured grid becomes analogous to a visual metaphor suggesting many things. Multiple functions start becoming apparent, and the gridlines in the paintings serve as a literal highlight for more ominous interpretations. The highlighted spaces between the panels begin to serve as reminders of loss, separation of reason, fissures in memory, gaps in language, ruptured seams, a fractured existence, the edge of the wound, gaps in language, an "ordered" deterioration of a system. The structural composition I employ with the use of a fluorescent, uneven grid is but one element that informs the viewer of perhaps, a failed system of
correspondence. These are paintings of allegories and mythic antidotes composed in an exemplary manner. It is not my intention to lead the viewer into a therapeutic interest in my life story as much as to prompt toward psychic reflection. I'm trying to offer a possibility to reflect on some of the mechanisms that must of necessity underlie a viewers' own memories. If the allegory is viewed as a healing process, capable of fitting together fragments of lost or forgotten meaning, it may also offer possibilities for each individual's personal encounter with grief and melancholy and the semantics of transformation.

My paintings have not been simply broken into panels. These paintings are connected to my own experiences of loss, displacement, isolation and ultimately, transformation. Being adopted, and having little knowledge of my biological parents (or their whereabouts) I am personally and inextricably connected to the concept of loss. Access to my birth records are sealed by a bureaucratic grid system that makes it virtually impossible for me to obtain information on my biological parents and it is thus an archetype of that impenetrable grid system that I seek to activate within these paintings. The information contained within these grid systems exists to be accessed and yet remains hermetically sealed, therefore confining it to subjective speculation.
The viewer of my paintings is left to speculate upon meaning with the available information just as I am left to speculate my own heritage, affixing my own personal mythology, based upon what has been lost and what is known. The glowing spaces in between, the gaps of knowledge, the emphasis on seams, become as wounds. Therefore, as we have all been wounded by loss at some point or another within our lives, so too does the rectilinear picture plane usually associated with the presentation of an oil painting, become wounded and transformed.

To bring out the fragmentary nature of the reminiscent it may be necessary from a purely technical point of view to make use of some of the facets associated with analytical cubism, which allows the picture to be experienced in a rhythmical staccato. In deliberately fragmenting the various elements of my paintings, whether structurally or content wise, an allegorical and anecdotal method is used to reconstruct metaphor and to sew together the fleeting glimpses of something in a way that mimics the incessant temporal flux that is part of the experience of life. The divisions thus constitute a way of making visible the cleft, the cut, the loss, and the edges of the wound that separates the present from the past. The interpretation of what is traumatic about loss, displacement, absence and the disappearance of the past may be tenuous, but it finds support in the following: the pain of a fragmented existence is cultivated in the work of several artists whose work exercises various degrees of influence over my own. Francis Bacon, Jenny
Saville, Odd Nerdrum, Joel-Peter Witkin and Jerome Witkin all produce work that convey a distinct aesthetic that emphasizes the materiality of the wound, or at least, a *type* of wound.
Processes = Alchemy, Iconoclasm & Metaphors

The word that first comes to mind as a descriptive term for the process used to develop these paintings is *organic*. The second word that comes to mind is *alchemy*. Concerning the former, the planning that goes into the scale of each panel, arrangement of panels, and overall final placement and scale is random at best. Nothing is predetermined, except perhaps, the day glow aerosol paint applied to the freshly gessoed canvas. The choice of color coincides with the medium in the sense that spray paint tends to be used as a masking agent, an inexpensive medium sold in hardware stores for utilitarian purposes. It's a medium used to repair as well as deface, referencing its preference as a medium of choice by graffiti artists. This, coupled with the fact that I am using a fluorescent color, gives dual meaning to the term *fugitive color*, since the bombastic works produced by graffiti artists are sometimes considered criminal in placement. Spray paint's lowbrow association with middle class, urban and suburban culture is remotely referenced in my use of it within these paintings, thus hinting at my own background.

The fact that I've chosen to use only one color for the ground of these particular paintings is no coincidence. Fluorescent red/orange is a color that is usually associated with a heightened state of emergency. It is a color that usually denotes danger or caution, a hue that is deliberately employed to attract attention. It is a color that, when seen, triggers a response of nervous
attention, (i.e.; fluorescent cones on a freeway indicating roadwork, or rerouting of traffic,) just as much as it draws attention in an obtrusive manner towards signs indicating that something is 'FOR SALE' or whether or not a business is 'OPEN' or 'CLOSED'. Although electronically produced, the fluorescent red/orange used in emergency 'EXIT' signs emote a state of urgency, meant to direct your attention and hurry you along. Being aware of this, I use it in a way to evoke a similar knee-jerk responses within these paintings.

Fluorescent red/orange is a color that tends to clash with nearly every environment it is placed in, especially, I think, when surrounded by the rest of my palette for these works, which is subdued and consists mostly of somber tones of black, gray and white. The fluorescent color is shown in a way that lets the viewer know that underneath the imagery, is a field of blazing red/orange that could possibly symbolize anger or even a terror level alert.

Additionally, the use of spray paint combined with oil paint remotely emphasizes another hybrid aspect of my paintings. That of the mixing of mediums. One medium, with a rich tradition of art history and cultural sophistication and another medium, with its contemporary association of disenfranchisement, vandalism, kitsch and blue collar utilitarianism. In some of the paintings, the fluorescent spray paint is completely covered with oil paint, with only hints of the day glow color showing through in minute areas. In other paintings, the fluorescent color is left partially exposed,
usually towards the upper portion of a painting, suggesting an exposure of some sort. Is the exposure of day glow meant to represent another realm of existence? Another level of meaning? A way of redirecting or even distracting the viewer? Or does it merely function as a splash of eye-popping color floating midst a field of cooler, somber colors associated with death and isolation, a contrast of life force being imposed upon by death or vice versa? A rude awakening midst an atmosphere of despair? Or perhaps it is suggestive of a form of release, a false sense of freedom from darkness into a superficially "enlightened" state.

Undeniably, the use of the fluorescent color also functions, if somewhat haphazardly, as a metaphor for something glowing, a type of semi-hidden energy force emanating from underneath. In this sense, the form suits the content and the content calls for a certain technique of interplay between the fluorescent ground and the representational imagery. This is where the organic begins to overlap with the alchemical aspect of these paintings.

Alchemy, as it applies to the paintings within this exhibit, is employed at ambiguous levels. In James Elkins book What Painting Is, the author states that alchemy has an advantage over theology, Jungian psychology or art criticism for exploring spiritual meaning in art because it is a sister discipline. Alchemy is also shy in that it also keeps to substances and lets them silently fill with meaning rather than blurting out what seems most precious or relevant. I strongly support
this perspective because I believe that paintings, in alchemical terms, must have that spark that 
signals an incipient spirit. Because those requirements can be so vague yet crucial, it comes as 
no surprise that the *materia prima* associated with painting goes by many names.

In alchemy, the *materia prima* is often lead—meaning not so much the chemical 
substance lead as the *heaviness and darkness* of lead. Lead is like compacted waste, dull and 
blunt and poisonous. Both lead and gold are heavy but both shine, one with light and the other 
with darkness. An artist who thinks of starting from lead, as I do, is experiencing raw paint as a 
kind of sickness, and the act of painting as its convalescence, which is a common enough feeling. 
A whole chain of associations bind artists to lead: lead was said to be Saturn's metal, and Saturn 
was the sign of melancholy, which was the traditional artists' affliction. These ideas have long 
since been reconsidered but the sadness, darkness, and heaviness of lead are still very much 
entangled with depression. In this sense, it's safe to assume that the paintings within this exhibit 
were partially born out of my own situational depression stemming from personal circumstances 
involving feelings of isolation related to loss and loneliness.

I use many techniques associated with traditional illusionism in the actual oil painting part 
of the process. These techniques vary from chiaroscuro, tenebrism, glazing, scumbling, etc. and 
play ambiguous roles: sometimes they straightforwardly further dramatic realism or verisimilitude,
while other times these methods function in a quotational way, pointed to as a means, rather than being permitted to disappear into the overall impression that they serve. In this way, the paintings become self-referential as certain passages are imbued with a deliberately self-conscious manner of painting that borders on becoming overworked. Surfaces are built up and scraped down and scratched into, producing a surface that is charged with a type of nervous energy that becomes more evident the closer one moves to a painting and dissipates as the viewer steps back.

Regarding the actual imagery, accuracy of representation applies somewhat to the figurative aspect in as much as I want the images to be immediately recognizable. But thereafter, the representational becomes merely another means for the deliverance of iconoclastic metaphor, where different impulses prevail.
The only presupposition on the viewer's part that I operate with is an obvious one: that they must have a concept of what it means to be human, an ability to empathize or at least identify with another person's conjured and composite images. Thus my choice of figurative imagery placed within darkened, confining spaces that open outward from the wall, replete with "illuminated" edges, to the viewer. If Francis Bacon, whose paintings subconsciously influence my own, was seeking a "shorthand of sensation" in his paintings, than I am trying to convey, at least in part, a meditation of sensation. Various methods are employed to help facilitate such responses. Aside from the obvious device of using multiple panels to divide the picture plane into fragments, figurative elements are arranged in a way that suggest different stages of displacement. A type of spiritual dismemberment is also suggested. Figures are often depicted as floating or suspended in space, a personal metaphor for a type of existential dilemma associated with being lost, searching or en route to another level of existence.

One doesn't have to be Catholic to be familiar with aspects of a purgatorial existence, which we all feel at one time or another. I connect the notion of fragmented body parts with fragmented lives. The placement of these figurative parts within murky interiors suggest isolation or imprisonment. The addition of an extra digit on some of the figures is based on a combination
of mythology and biblical interpretations of various events that occurred in the book of Genesis.

According to one interpretation, 'the mighty men of renown', as referenced in Genesis 6:4, are the Gibborim, created by a union of fallen angel and the daughters of men. They are half-breeds, angelic hybrids, the Titans. The Greek word *titanos* means grays, which is a prevalent color used throughout these paintings to model flesh as well as some background shadows. I have chosen to use an ashen, albino white as a skin tone for all except two of the figures throughout the exhibit, to represent an absence of "life" or a spiritually dying creature.

When fallen angels shape-shift into a form of human being they may have intercourse but not without some aberrant genetic changes. The union of these creatures with humans produced children that were different in many ways. The first apparent difference was that they developed gigantism. They were male giants or Nehalem. Go the King of Bashan had a bed that was 13 to 15 feet long; and Goliath was 6 cubits tall (9 feet).

The proportions of the figure in the painting, *Sheol*, allude to a larger-than-average figure. The second aberration was that they had six fingers and six toes, as exemplified with the figures appearing within the paintings *Graft Set Ruin* and *Stutter*. Delving further into the associated mythology; the aberrant genetic tendencies of the Nephilim were unfortunately cloned into the D.N.A. of mankind and distributed around the earth in Genesis 10. Within the visual language and
the chosen narrative of these paintings, fallen angels and their spawn therefore represent the ultimate metaphor in the concept of displacement and isolation. In all of the paintings except for *Noel*, the averted gaze, the closing or even absence of eyes indicate an avoidance; a turning away, an inability to look out of their pigmented realm and into the world of light and the living.
Hybrid Semantix: A Synopsis of Symbolism in the Paintings

The first painting within the thesis series, *Incident*, (Plates 6-8) is an allegorical depiction of states of being. The recumbent plump female figure, which has been appropriated from a painting by the Norwegian painter, Odd Nerdrum, entitled, *Pissing Woman*, resides in darkness at the bottom of the painting which has been divided into three segments. A statement regarding this particular Nerdrum painting, was the primary reason I chose to use his image, in addition to the symbolic reference:

"...The ideas are often insane visions that I go to put into a human context....When I start working, there is often some local meanness in the picture, but as I keep on working, I force it out of the local and into an eternal, universal image—a transformation."

Her flesh is a cadaverous, as is her gaze, with one eye darkened and the other eye a dead blue, staring out at the viewer or perhaps into nothingness. It must be noted here that the single blue eye is a collage element, cut from the image of a canine. She is helpless, without arms or legs, suspended in darkness.
Emerging from this pool of darkness is a dark male figure wearing a mask that has been fashioned from a white water bird—an egret perhaps. This image was appropriated from a magazine article about an African tribe who uses such masks as camouflage to hunt food and spy on rival tribes. I am using the image as a metaphor for rising from the darkness into the light; a transformative process. The palm emerging from the darkness has become limpid, glittering and streaked with blood and shadow, beckoning, welcoming, presenting, full of potential. The tomblike space is dissolving, as another level of freedom and enlightenment manifests.

_Graft Set Ruin_ (Plates 9-10) the second painting produced for the exhibit is yet another rumination on a state of being. The title _Graft Set Ruin_ is an anagram of the words 'strange fruit', which is the title of a poem by Abel Meeropol, (who used the pseudonym 'Lewis Allen' for the work) a Jewish schoolteacher from the Bronx. The poem is about the lynching of black men in the South and was later popularized in a song of the same name by Billie Holiday. In my painting, the legs could represent a state of suspension or levitation. The reference to death and transformation is made somewhat obvious by the cadaverous hue of the skin. The presence of a sixth toe makes reference to the aforementioned supernatural, hybrid race, the Gibborim. The decayed looking pear suspended in darkness could represent a body, the holy spirit, a strangely placed fruit. The back of the headless figure to the right of the canvas is darker in flesh tones but just as fragmented. The deliberate misalignment of the spine suggests a broken back. The big
toe of the right foot is separated by a crack; "...step on a crack, break your mama's back..." The diminishing figure gingerly grasps a red string within its six-fingered hand—a bloodline perhaps? There is a fleur de lis pattern on the left shoulder of the figure as well as on the wall in very faint outline. The fleur-de-lis symbol in Christian Europe is strongly linked to Mary, as the lily was a symbol of her purity. It is one of the most controversial of all symbols with a rich and varied history. One of the more fantastic histories attached to the fleur-de-lis is the suggestion that it is the emblem of a secret family line—a symbol of the blood of Christ carried by Merovingian kings. Additionally, the fleur-de-lis has also been said to represent the Tree of Life, which also descends into the Netherworld. Thus the painting becomes another allegory for ascension or descent and the accompanying transformation involved in passing from one realm to another.

_**Stutter**_ (Plates 11-17) is actually the _first_ painting produced for Hybrid Semantix even though it appears as the third painting within the exhibit. The painting is of a being whose world has been turned upside down and whose place of solace has dissolved or is in the process of dissolving. The being does not look at all disturbed by his topsy turvy state. In fact, the being appears to be in a state of meditation or perhaps sleep.

Again, the cadaverous pallor of the skin and the emaciated form suggests death, or a state resembling death. The pose is embryonic...suggesting rebirth? The mouth has been painted in and then sanded out. Removed. _Deliberately silenced_. A vow, perhaps? A secret? The six
figured, left hand crackles with some kind of frenetic energy. There is a standing figure to the left of the floating central figure. This figure is the front of the figure that appears in _Graft Set Ruin_.

The figure is also fragmented. The top portion of its head is missing...no brain...no ears...no eyes.

Blind and deaf? Is it the same figure that's floating? It has a mouth but it cannot speak for lack of a brain. The floating figure has a complete head but it cannot speak for lack of a mouth.

Disconnected from the 5 panels that make up the main portion of _Stutter_ is a sixth panel located adjacent to the painting's lower right corner. The image is of a small child, a little eleven-fingered boy who is covering his face. Across his abdomen is the word 'Almighty'. The little boy covering his face may very well be God; immature, afraid and completely powerless.

In _Bruise_ (Plates 18) a pale figure stands with his back to the viewer. The letters across his back are scrambled—the word 'almighty' again, upside down and backwards to produce a statement of gibberish. Upon his head is an apple. William Tell and William Burroughs come to mind. The figure is fragmented, its body divided into sections, cut-ups. William Burroughs accidentally shot and killed his wife during a drunken game of William Tell in which he tried unsuccessfully to shoot a glass of water off of his common law wife's head. The floor of the room is the color of a bruise, symbolizing a world of hurt. To the right of the figure, seeming to hover, is a reclining set of legs. One foot is a cloven hoof, traditionally associated with the devil, prancing in the air. Perhaps the cloven hoof alludes to man's more bestial, unclean qualities. Again, the
space is a type of semi-claustrophobic, open-ended imprisonment that dissolves into the searing fluorescent orange, symbolizing a type of release. The paint on the walls is scumbled and mottled producing a distressed surface resembling scratched walls. *Bruise* becomes a painting about the dangers associated with self-isolation.

The fifth painting of the exhibit is *Sheol* (Plates 19-22). It is the largest painting in the exhibit. The title of the painting is a biblical place from the Old Testament in which those who rejected Jehovah were sent while still alive. It is not hell but it is often mistaken with hell. It is a place that inspires fear, but conveys no clearly defined idea. One description of Sheol, as described by Job is as follows; 

"...A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where light is as darkness..." (Job 10:22).

In my painting of Sheol, a nude elongated figure stands on a stairwell that is lit with fluorescent lights, obviously a contemporary version of Sheol. The model for the stairwell is from a digital photo I snapped of the stairwell that I have ascended and descended on a near daily basis for the last three years leading to and from the third floor of the Art Department at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, where my painting studio is located and where I painted *Sheol*. The cropped, posterior and centralized view of the figure retains the cadaverous white flesh. The body is fragmented in five places. The knees are broken, if you will, by a horizontal split that runs the length of the canvas. The left leg is divided into four segments at the knee. The overall feeling I wanted to convey in
this painting was one of static motion. The edges of the figure have been scratched to reveal the fluorescent ground beneath the oil paint, suggesting an emanation of energy—this is emphasized by the fluorescent edges of the canvas that are slightly visible where the multiple canvases meet, as well as underneath the surface of the painted stairs. What is this energy that is being discharged? Is it anger? Is it lust? Is it deception? Does it pertain to the very reason this figure now resides in Sheol? The figures' arms are bent at the elbows to suggest that it may be carrying something. Or its hands may be clasped in prayer? The bottom step is stained with red, the symbolism becoming obvious. Sheol may very well be a visual testament to those purgatorial places we sometimes find ourselves momentarily stranded in within the more desperate times of our lives.

The sixth and second largest painting of the exhibit is Noel, (Plates 24-26). It is also the last but definitely not least of all the paintings. The painting Noel, while still employing the use of fragmented canvases is altogether different in composition and feel from the five previous paintings. More sanguine in nature, it is a much brighter painting that lacks the overt melancholia associated with the other paintings in the exhibit.

Noel is a painting of my teenage daughter who has only recently reentered my life within the last 3 years. Upon entering graduate school nearly 3 years ago, I received notice that she had
been removed from her mother's custody and become a ward of the state. Prior to that I hadn't
known of her whereabouts and the last time I saw her she was only 3 months old. At the time of
this painting, her age is 17. In the short time that I've gotten to know my daughter, we have
become incredibly close. However, because I am a non-custodial parent, our bonding process
has been an arduous one, fraught with complications brought about by a child "protective" welfare
system that seems more determined to disrupt a struggling family system then help it.
Nonetheless, our relationship has grown and where there was once separation, loss and
alienation, there is now love, appreciation and a sense of belonging. The painting Noel is truly a
labor of love and is a celebration of my daughter's renewed presence in my life.

Originally the painting had started out with my daughter being depicted as a mermaid.
The inspiration came to me as we were frolicking in the ocean together during one of the rare
visits I was able to have with her over the summer. After presenting the idea to my daughter she
agreed to pose for it and a few preliminary sketches were made before I started in on the
canvases. In the process of preparing the canvases, I used some of my daughter's hair mixed
with gel medium to create a textured surface. Like fingernails or limbs, hair was believed to
preserve an intimate connection with its owner even when it ceased to be part of him or her. It
symbolized its owner's virtues by concentrating their qualities spiritually, and retained a
sympathetic link. Somewhat akin to this, is the custom in many families of keeping locks of hair

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and children's baby teeth. Such practices are more than the preservation of mementos: they betray the desire for the survival of the person from whose head the hair was taken.

Before long, the painting of Noel as a mermaid began to take on gargantuan proportions and I realized that it needed to be scaled down. I ended up editing out the mermaids' tail and changing the direction of the painting altogether to become a somewhat stylized portrait of my daughter. Noel is the only painting in the exhibit in which the figure's gaze directly confronts the viewer. The left side of the canvas is heavily sanded into a distressed surface, symbolizing a scarred past.

The multiple panels are deliberately misaligned, emphasizing the fractured existence that so desperately wants to piece itself back together. The multiple canvases are arranged to reveal an open slit in her chest from which delicately drawn flowers emerge, symbolizing growth and love. The flowers could also seek to beautify the past in a transparent manner. But she is turning away from the past. She is gesturing with her left hand towards the future. Open palmed, with fingers curled slightly, it is an intimate gesture ripe with possibility. Her hand, which is depicted as larger than her head, breaks free of the neutral colored background and emerges into the fluorescent ground. The soul symbol swirls about her hand like a release (or gathering) of energy. Overlaid across the entire image is the word 'LOVE', employing a font culled from the Internet.
Viewers have mistakenly thought the letters spelled the title of the painting (my daughter's name, 'Noel'), a deliberate coercion. The name of the font is 'Collins' and it is the same font used in a tattoo upon my back that represents a connection to my estranged children. Sign painting enamel was chosen for these letters for its glossy, tarlike resonance. The letters boldly interrupt the composure of the portrait and act as a screen between the figure and the viewer. The painting is a testimony to the love I have for my daughter and it's very likely that this painting will be a point of departure for future works pertaining to me, my daughter, and our ever evolving relationship. In the end, the painting, Noel, becomes a symbol of hope, connected, but also triumphantly dissociated from the previous five paintings in the exhibit. An allusion to a break from the troubled past, gesturing toward a new day and a brighter future.
Summary

As stated within the opening DeLillo passage I really have "...always believed I could see things other people couldn't..." The paintings within the *Hybrid Semantix* exhibit are an attempt to see "...shapes in the chaos of things..." Just as these paintings come from places within me, places of shadow and light, I conclude that all art is a language of the heart. It is a primal voice that chronically stutters when it means to speak, crawls when it aches to fly, and, at long last, as the gods take pity, eventually soars into its own form of eloquence. The paintings contained within this exhibit draw inspiration from a blended world of dark and light, both literally and figuratively. I have attempted to make symbolic paintings that depict an odd state of grace. Francis Bacon said that one of the purposes of painting is "to deepen the mystery". It is a statement that is steeped in nuance. I have always appreciated the subtle cynicism of Bacon's quote. For Bacon seemed to understand the semantics of painting even while he faltered at trying to be a morally upright person. Likewise, with the paintings contained within the *Hybrid Semantix* exhibit, I have tried to convey a vision that expresses a profundity and compassion born of personal struggle. Because after all, our lives are stories laden with *accidental patterns which seem to make up a good portion of our existence, for better or worse*. These paintings are but visual, open-ended stories in which most of the psychic narrative is left up to the viewer.
How beautiful (and frightening) the notion that we create our own personal catastrophes and that it is the transformative forces within us that are instrumental in doing this. Here, our creative impulses lie in ambush at the side of our lives, ready to leap forth and kick holes in it—holes in which inspiration, and maybe even redemption can rise.

We each have our need to create, and sorrow itself is often a catalyst for a creative act that speaks in many tongues.
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Hybrid Semantix: The Paintings

Plate 1: Gallery View
Plate 2: Gallery View
Plate 3: Gallery View
Plate 4: Gallery View
Plate 5: Gallery View
Plate 6: Incident (After Odd Nerdrum's *Pissing Woman*)

78 x 72"
Plate 7: Odd Nerdrum's *Pissing Woman*
Plate 8: Incident (Detail)
Plate 9: Graft Set Ruin

66 x 60"
Plate 10: Graft Set Ruin (Detail)
Plate 11: Stutter

78 x 72"
Plate 12: Stutter (Detail)
Plate 13: Stutter (Detail)
Plate 14: Stutter (Detail)
Plate 15: Stutter (Detail)
Plate 16: Stutter (Detail)
Plate 17: Stutter ('Almighty' Segment Detail)
Plate 18: Bruise

78 x 72"
Plate 19: Sheol

78 x 90"
Plate 20: Sheol (Detail)
Plate 21: Sheol (Detail)
Plate 22: Sheol (Detail)
Plate 23: Noel

78 x 102"
Plate 24: Noel (Detail)
Plate 26: Noel (Detail)