

Todd Carpenter

1995 Master's of Science in Neuroscience, University of California San Diego

1991 Bachelor's of Science in Psychobiology, University of California Los Angeles

“나는 내 그림에서, 입체성과 분위기가 빛에 의해 우리에게 어떻게 드러나게 되는지 살펴본다. 우리의 시각적 세계에서, 인식과 미학적 경험을 유희하는 빛의 역할에 대해 관심이 있다. 빛과 사물 사이의 상호작용이 우리가 사물들을 보는 것을 가능하게 하며 우리가 본 것에 대한 우리의 이해는 빛과 공간의 미묘함을 기반으로 한다.”

Statement, 2015: Carbon

As a painter, I am particularly interested in the depiction of light, and in the ways in which light contributes to our experience of paintings.

As with any visual art, painting obviously has an essential dependence on light, but there are other, more specific ways in which light is important for paintings. In particular, the depiction of light is crucial for realism. Realism in paintings presumably arises from the accurate portrayal of depth: to see a painting as realistic means to see its subject as existing in more than just the two dimensions of the picture plane. There are several mechanisms by which humans perceive depth, one of which being the detection of lighting cues. The behavior of light in space, generating features such as variations in shading and contrast, tells us about the three-dimensional arrangement of our surroundings. Artists have long used the depiction of these illumination phenomena to impart realism to depicted scenes.

Another manner in which light contributes to paintings is through its ability to impact emotion. The lighting of our surroundings can evoke human emotion, as clearly evidenced by the influences sunsets, candlelight, and darkness can have on us. Effects such as these suggest that our perception of light might be connected to primitive instincts, with light possibly signaling environmental variables - such as shelter, nightfall, or warmth - that were once crucial for survival. The depiction of certain lighting conditions in a painting might have a similar ability to modulate the perceived significance of the represented scene and thus contribute to the emotional impact of the painting.

One reason why I paint in grayscale is that it is suited for the portrayal of light. The lighting features our brains rely on for the perception of depth are apparently built primarily on tone rather than hue. This idea is supported by research in neuroscience that suggests that the areas of the visual system that process spatial relationships are to some degree distinct from areas that encode the colors and details used to delineate specific objects. By painting in grayscale I am attempting to interact with this part of our visual system, with the hope of imparting a degree of realism, and perhaps also conveying some of the emotional significance that light can imbue on places.

It is through light that we see the world, but light itself is also seen, with an impact independent of the objects that project it. Light is both the crisp contrast of a back-lit forest and the gray haze of an industrial landscape, its perceptual power being what transmits the distinct atmospheres of such scenes to the viewer. This ability of light to effect us is the connection between the diverse subjects depicted in my paintings.

The title of this exhibition refers to another commonality shared across its varied subject matter: the chemical element that is both the foundation for the ecosystems of this planet and an agent for our harm to those ecosystems, and which is also the essence of the black pigment used for these paintings. In keeping with this chemistry, the titles of the individual paintings are based on the names of organic molecules that naturally occur in certain plants. Being organic according to the technical use of the term, these molecules - not unlike the paintings they name - are built from a skeleton of carbon.

Solo Exhibitions

- 2015 *Carbon*, KP Projects, Los Angeles, CA
- 2014 *Inseparate*, Merry Karnowsky Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2013 *Speculations*, Merry Karnowsky Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2012 *Grey*, LAUNCH, Los Angeles, CA
- 2012 GaGa Gallery, Insa-dong, Seoul, Korea
- 2012 MayJune Gallery, Gangnam-gu, Seoul, Korea
- 2011 *Specifically Ambiguous*, LAUNCH, Los Angeles, CA
- 2010 *Scaped*, LAUNCH, Los Angeles, CA
- 2009 *Observations*, Lawrence Asher Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2008 Black-and-White Paintings and Color Photographs, Four Walls, San Diego, CA
- 2006 *A Travel Log of Fireflies*, Four Walls, San Diego, CA
- 2005 *Pattern and Contrast*, Four Walls, San Diego, CA