



Dever Moves Into Color

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by Pat Rogers

There's an explosion of art at the Sara Nightingale Gallery. Bright reds, earthy browns, pale pinks and deep purples dominate the paintings on the walls. Here are two insider tips: All the colors in the paintings were made from three colors. The introduction of color to Eric Dever's paintings is an event to be noticed.

Before "S.Ram: Red White and Black Paintings by Eric Dever," the painter focused on exploring paint through a single color. Titanium White and its shades were painted into series of small fields and quilted together to form round targets or rectangles occupying an entire canvas.

Ivory Black was introduced to the Titanium White two years ago. The overall shapes remained steady as Dever continued to explore painting plus tonal and shading possibilities by the addition of the new color.

Last year, Dever stepped in Naphthol Scarlet Red to expand his painting practice to a trio of base colors plus the various shades, tones and hues that could arise. The results are on view in "S.Ram" at Sara Nightingale Gallery in Water Mill, NY.



Installation shot of "S.Ram: Red White and Black Paintings by Eric Dever" at Sara Nightingale Gallery. Photo by Gary Mamay.



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Dever's new color pallet, exposed in an explosion of paintings dominating the gallery, is striking. It can be difficult to decide where to look first—each painting is compelling in its own right. Compositions featuring small painted fields built to create round targets or crisp rectangles continue in this new body of work. That's where the similarity ends and new explorations begin.

Besides the new range of color, the deviations in composition and the color applications are eye-

catching. Sometimes, sloping lines, an unexpected opening in the circle or an uneven edge infuses interest. Other times, colored bands radiating outward in unforetold patterns captures attention.



“NSIBTW-17” by Eric Dever, 2012. Oil on burlap, 36 x 36 inches.
Photo by Gary Mamay.



“NSIBTW-19” by Eric Dever, 2012. Oil on canvas, 36 x 36 inches.
Photo by Gary Mamay.



“NS-1” by Eric Dever, 2012. Oil on burlap 36 x 36 inches. Photo by
Gary Mamay.

s.Ram III seems to fly in the face of Dever’s past with its indefinable composition and free flowing abstraction. The centerpiece is a floating field of soften purples with peeping of pinks. The cloud of color seems to ebb almost abruptly into exposed linen, its natural texture playing its part in the painting. Linking the work to Dever’s painting style is the miniature square receptacles of paint that create the abstract artwork.



“s.Ram III” by Eric Dever, 2012. Oil on linen, 48 x 48 inches. Photo
by Gary Mamay.

The addition of red was prompted after a trip to Southern France in 2011. Describing the terrain as “marked by blood and wine,” the idea was further developed by his reading Roland Barthes’ essay, *Wine and Milk* while traveling.

“Red, while also the color of blood, is above all a converting substance capable of reversing situations and states, and of extracting from objects their opposites. Hence its old alchemical heredity, its philosophical power to transmute and create ex nihilo,” quoted Dever in an artist

statement on his new work.

Dever's yoga practice deepened the connection when he learned of the spiritual symbolism held by black, white and red through the three gunas, he said. Tamas is black and channels darkness and matter, he said. Satva is white, symbolizing light and the ether sphere, he said. Rajas is red and is the energy that binds them together, along with all existence.

He discovered Naphthol Scarlet Red, when mixed with Ivory Black or Titanium White, creates an array of reds, pinks, purples, browns, blacks, burgundies and more.



"NSIBTW-22" by Eric Dever. Photo by Gary Mamay.



"NSTW-6" by Eric Dever. Oil on burlap, 36 x 36 inches. Photo by Gary Mamay.

The circle, which was already a favorite of Dever, symbolically implies unity, wholeness and eternity. Dever added the cross as a painting shape where he can maintain a defined outward trajectory with paint that allows him freedom to explore the color continuum, he said.



"NSTW-8" by Eric Dever. Photo by Gary Mamay.



"NSIBTW-9" by Eric Dever. Oil on burlap, 36 x 36 inches. Photo by Gary Mamay.



"NSIBTW-11" by Eric Dever. Photo by Gary Mamay.



“NSIB-3” by Eric Dever. Oil on canvas, 36 x 36 inches. Photo by Gary Mamay.

For contrast and to fully display Dever’s evolution as a painter, “s.Ram” includes older works rendered from Titanium White or Titanium White and Ivory Black. Paintings are made on canvas, burlap or linen.



“LUC-XiV” by Eric Dever. Oil on canvas, 36 x 36 inches. Photo by Gary Mamay.



Installation of works by Eric Dever at Sara Nightingale Gallery.
Photo by Gary Mamay.

BASIC FACTS: “S.Ram: Red White and Black Paintings by Eric Dever” remains on view through Dec 12, 2012 at Sara Nightingale Gallery, 688 Montauk Hwy, Water Mill, NY. saranightingale.com.

“S.Ram” is Dever’s fifth solo show at Sara Nightingale Gallery. Dever’s solo shows have been held nationally and internationally. They include Cloître des Billettes (Paris, France), the Centre d’Art et de Rencontres, Château d’Escueillens (Saint-Just de Bellengard, France), Nicholas Davies Gallery (New York, NY), ARC Gallery (Chicago, Illinois) and others.

Dever’s work is held in private, public and corporate collections. His painting “Cloud Life” was included in Joe Pinturo’s “The Painting Plays” staged at the John Drew Theater at Guild Hall in East Hampton, NY in 2012.

Additional artwork can be viewed at ericdever.com.