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Florilegium by Daniel Hutchinson at Angell Gallery

In *Florilegium* by Daniel Hutchinson at Angell Gallery, black, shimmering paintings are displayed that give the impression that, within the gallery space, the viewer is seeing mirages of serene rural spaces. The thick application of black paint in ridge and furrow patterns creates the illusion of etching which makes up the design, replacing the need for color. These heavy brushstrokes with thick paint create a textured surface that is matte or shiny depending on the viewer's position. The spaces portrayed in Hutchinson's paintings are flooded with lush flora, simultaneously giving the impression that the viewer could be looking into an interior or looking out to an exterior.



Installation view of Daniel Hutchinson: *Florilegium*. Photo: Alex Fischer

Hutchinson moved his studio from downtown Hamilton to an old factory in a residential neighborhood in the same city. There, he noticed the evolution of old commercial buildings being turned to private homes. In the exhibition essay, he describes these spaces saying, "large storefront windows that once displayed products now contained decorative objects, screens or overgrown plants...provided privacy and reflected the inhabitants' personalities." He reproduces the qualities of these spaces in his work.



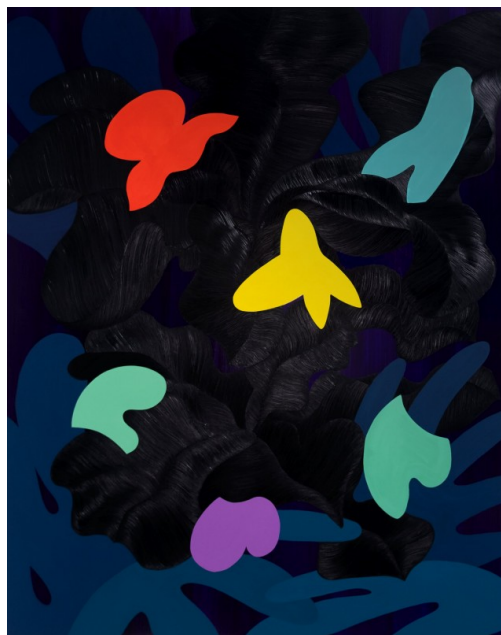
Daniel Hutchinson. "Rustic Chair with Watermelons", 2019, oil on canvas over panel, 48 inches diameter

In his monumental work, "A Window Garden with Figs, Watermelon, Sunflowers, and Squash", 2019, Hutchinson creates the illusion that the viewer could step into the space of the painting. The space looks enclosed yet the plants are unruly and wild, with different fruit-bearing species overlapping with each other having outgrown the compact space. The structure of a bench with a trellis backing made of natural branches is covered by unruly foliage, taking over the rigid forms of the room. A trailing plant hangs down from the ceiling of the space just as a chandelier would. Sunflowers reach from the bottom to the top of the work, the heads bending with the weight of their seeds. There is a combination of domestic, potted plants and growth that appears to be emerging from the ground of an interior space.



Daniel Hutchinson: "A Window Garden with Figs, Watermelon, Sunflowers, and Squash", 2019, oil and acrylic on canvas over panel, 96 x 77 in

The composition, titled "Florilegium", 2019, cuts through the pure black paintings with bright pastels that are starkly matte compared to the fluid and shining qualities forming the paintings. The panel consists of large, black lush leaves with ridges that shine against the gallery lighting, giving them the illusion of movement and life. Dispersed randomly are petals of pastel color that appear to be floating on top of the surface of the canvas. These bright swatches of color mimic the experience of seeing the 'after image' which is a 'fleeting perceptual imprint of an object on the retina'. This is the experience of seeing traveling flashes of color perceived against the darkness on the back of closed eyelids after looking upon a bright subject.



Daniel Hutchinson: "Florilegium", 2019, oil and acrylic on canvas over panel, 60 x 48 in

The pastoral quality of Hutchinson's paintings brings repose to the mind with shimmering scenes that could disappear at a next glance.

Olivia Musselwhite

Images are courtesy of Angell Gallery

*Exhibition information: November 16 – December 21, 2019, Angell Gallery, 1444 Dupont St., Unit 15, Toronto.
Gallery hours: Wed – Sat, 12 – 5 pm.

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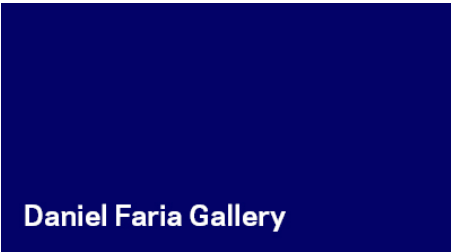


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Daniel Faria Gallery

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