



Via Dolorosa, the Stations of the Cross

new paintings by Christopher Rico

Narthex Gallery, March 16 - May 1, 2017
Opening Reception - Friday, March 17th, 6 pm-8 pm

619 Lexington Avenue at 54th Street, New York, NY

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Exhibition Contact: Nicoline Strom-Jenson, Exhibition Coordinator, art.saintpeters@gmail.com, 212.935.2200

What: Art Exhibition/Gallery Exhibition, painting, contemporary art, abstract painting

Title of event: “Via Dolorosa”, a re-imagining of the Stations of the Cross, by Christopher Rico

Where: Narthex Gallery. 619 Lexington Avenue at 54th Street, New York City.

When: Show runs March 16 - May 1, 2017. Opening reception- Friday, March 17th from 6pm to 8pm. Press preview - Thursday, March 16th.

Details:

Christopher Rico's first solo exhibition in NYC, *Via Dolorosa*, is a re-imagining of the Stations of the Cross. The body of work features 14 large-scale paintings, oil on linen, which encircle the Narthex Gallery, a space adjacent to the [Louise Nevelson Chapel](#). The work contends with the Christian prophet's last day as he walks from trial to tomb. Named after the road in Jerusalem that is historically believed to be the route towards the cross, the show's title, “Via Dolorosa” translates to Way of Sorrow, or Way of Suffering. Some of the titles of the stations have been changed to reflect Rico's own interpretational narrative; most notably perhaps, the three falls are replaced by the three failures.

Artist Statement

My paintings offer a momentary state of communion with my viewers. Within a strict black and white palette referencing both the anatomical and the landscape, my work seeks to reveal a contemporary sense of the sublime using light, depth, and the abyss as a metaphor of the divine. The practice merges subtle compositional references to religious art of the Renaissance with a contemporary secular sense of the spiritual. Through a process of pouring and manipulating paint on canvas with minimal contact as well as using more traditional wet-on-wet technique, I work to evolve my compositions to a point just before entropy. As in past turbulent times in history, it is my intention that my oil paintings create a space where dialogue can take place that embraces the universal and the mystical through abstraction.

More information:

The entire show can be previewed in this [Facebook Gallery](#).
www.christopherrico.com

Instagram: @christopher_rico

Twitter: @ChristopherRico

Christopher Rico, b. 1966, Tucson, AZ

Christopher Rico is an American abstract painter living and working in South Carolina. He grew up on military bases across the United States and has lived on both coasts and along both borders. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Memphis in 1995, followed by an intensive series of studio art and art history courses at Presbyterian College from 2003-2005. In 2016, he received his master's of arts from Clemson University.

Rico began his career as a sculptor and set designer for the theatre, receiving two Memphis Theatre Awards. His early explorations in painting were oxidized pigment on burnished copper panels. Eventually feeling limited by the medium and because of limited access to chemicals after 9/11, Rico switched to acrylic on panel and later to oil on canvas.

Raised in a fundamentalist denomination of Christianity devoid of religious images, Rico developed a childhood fascination with surrealism and mythologies from all different cultures. In the early 1990's he saw Barnett Newman's Stations of the Cross at the National Gallery in Washington D.C., along with large-scale works by Mark Rothko and Clifford Still. Shortly thereafter he traveled to Europe, where he encountered Gothic cathedrals for the first time in Germany and Austria. In 2006, he visited Istanbul and toured Hagia Sophia, where he was profoundly moved by the art of the Byzantine as well as the contemporary Turkish abstract art in the Istanbul Modern.

In 2009, Rico began making regular trips to New York City, where he met and befriended fellow painters. Experiencing artistic communion for the first time, the trips ignited Rico's studio practice, and in 2012 he moved from colorful work to his present black and white palette.

Rico has exhibited in regional art museums in South Carolina, as well as galleries in Atlanta, GA and New Orleans, L.A. He has been in two favorably reviewed recent group shows at Lyons Wier Gallery in Chelsea in the summer of 2015, and at Jonathan Ferrara Gallery in New Orleans in the summer of 2016. *Via Dolorosa* is his first solo show in New York.

Christopher Rico
Cirriculum Vitae

EDUCATION

2016 Master of Arts, Clemson University, Clemson, SC
1995 Bachelor of Arts, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN

GALLERY AFFILIATION

Jonathan Ferrara Gallery, New Orleans, LA
Art & Light Gallery, Greenville, SC

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2017 Via Dolorosa, Narthex Gallery, New York, NY
2016 That was yesterday, that day, Coldwell Banker Caine Gallery, Greenville, SC
2009 St. Theresa and small paintings, Art & Light Gallery, Greenville, SC
2000 40 Days, Levy Gallery, Memphis, TN
1999 State of the Union, Main Street Gallery, Memphis, TN
1998 Scatterings of Us, Theatreworks Atrium Gallery, Memphis, TN
1998 enemy:me, Memphis Edge Gallery, Memphis, TN

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2015 Unlimited Potential, Lyons Wier Gallery, New York, NY
2015 Artists of the Upstate exhibition, Artisphere, Greenville, SC
2014 Abstract Invitational, Spartanburg Museum of Art, Spartanburg, SC
2013 Abstract Invitational, Elizabeth Stone Harper Gallery, Clinton, SC
2013 ArtFields, Lake City, SC
2012 Spring Show, Art & Light Gallery, Greenville, SC
2010 Upstate Visual Art Fall Juried Show, Greenville, SC
2010 A little help from my friends, Los Angeles, CA
2008 Contemporaries' Artist of the Year, Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, SC
2008 Festival of Flowers Art Exhibit, Greenwood, SC
2007 Festival of Flowers Art Exhibit, Greenwood, SC
2005 Senior Art Exhibition, Presbyterian College, Clinton, SC
2003 Spring Group Show, Studio 1030-G, Atlanta, GA
2002 Winter Group Show, Studio 1030-G, Atlanta, GA
2002 Upstate Summer Invitational, Elizabeth Stone Harper Gallery, Clinton, SC
2001 Cartography, Red Shack Gallery, Seattle, WA
2000 ArtFarm!, Marshall Arts, Memphis TN

COLLABORATIONS

2009 The Forest and the Sea w/Justin Metcalf & TheySayBuild Productions, film
2003 Mood Swings, with Daily Dance Company, Harper Center Theatre, Clinton, SC
1999 Rise, Fall, Feast, with Loop Dance Company, Theatreworks, Memphis, TN
1998 Fresh Shadows, with Loop Dance Company, Theatreworks, Memphis, TN

CORPORATE/PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

2016 Polsinelli, Kansas City, MO
2005 Presbyterian College, Clinton, SC
2000 LeMoyne-Owen College, Memphis, TN
1999 Waddell & Associates, Memphis, TN

PUBLICATION

Bookhardt, E.D. (2016) '20th Annual NO DEAD ARTISTS Essay', Inside NOLA.
Gould, R. (2015) Decoding the abstract 'unlimited potential' at Lyons Wier gallery. Available at: <https://culturetrip.com>
Rico, C. (2009) The Forest and the Sea. 1st edn. United States: Blurb, Inc.
Rico, C. (2008) Paintings 2008. 1st edn. United States: Blurb, Inc.

**A complete list of images follows.
For high resolution images please contact the artist directly**

rico@christopherrico.com



“Condanna” (first station)
36” x 60”
oil on canvas
Rico ‘16



“Il Peso” (second station)
30” x 60”
oil on linen
Rico ‘16



“Il Primo Fallimento” (third station)
48” x 60”
oil on linen
Rico ‘16



“La Madre” (fourth station)
36” x 60”
oil on canvas
Rico ‘16



“Simon” (fifth station)
36” x 60”
oil on canvas
Rico ‘16



“Veronica” (sixth station)
30” x 60”
oil on linen
Rico ‘16



“Il Secundo Fallimento” (seventh station)
48” x 60”
oil on linen
Rico ‘16



“Le Donne” (eighth station)
30” x 60”
oil on linen
Rico ‘16



“Il Terzo Fallimento” (ninth station)
48” x 60”
oil on linen
Rico ‘16



“Spogliato” (tenth station)
48” x 60”
oil on linen
Rico ‘16



“Crocifissione” (eleventh station)
48” x 60”
oil on linen
Rico ‘17



“Morte” (twelfth station)
73” x 60” (two panels)
oil on linen
Rico ‘16



“Deposizione” (thirteenth station)
48” x 60”
oil on linen
Rico '16



“Sepoltura” (fourteenth station)
48” x 60”
oil on linen
Rico '16