

## Review: Miss seeing art? 100 artists come to the rescue with work in public view across L.A.



Chris Trueman's "DPW" is displayed on a roll-up door in an Upland industrial park. (Myung J. Chun / Los Angeles Times)

### **Christopher Knight, LA Times critic:**

Messing with the art is of course a risk for any public exhibition like this. (Nine works disappeared within days of the May 16 opening.) Sixty miles east, at the rear of a small industrial park in Upland, Chris Trueman has bolted a large painting to a roll-up door of one unit.

Paintings aren't usually hung outdoors and exposed to the elements. The only other person around on the day I saw it was the diligent operator of a parking lot sweeper. The experience was oddly thrilling.

Partly that's because, at a time when galleries and museums are shuttered and one mostly stays at home, rarity suddenly describes seeing in person all but a few types of art, like video and digital images. This is the first painting I've laid eyes on in months, outside my own house.

I wouldn't push the analogy too far, but for a moment it made me think what it must have been like to see painted pictures before 1839. That's when the camera's invention opened the door to mechanical reproduction, releasing what became a flood of analog and then digital pictures that we now experience daily. Imagery lost its miraculous quality as a simple given.

And partly the pleasure came from Trueman's sly evocation of Gerhard Richter, the celebrated German artist whose paintings of the past 50 years have addressed the image torrent and its perceptual complications. Trueman's abstract painting, titled "DPW" (inescapably suggesting Department of Public Works) is a layered, graffiti-like composition of gestural marks and spray paint, mostly in green, yellow and gray, plus black and white.

Atmospheric optical space opens up, despite being painted on a polypropylene support. Color sits on the surface because the synthetic material can't absorb acrylic paint. Pigment puddles, streaks and clouds.

The direct, expressive immediacy of the artist's hand is undercut, replaced by a strangely photoshopped appearance — a painting at once present yet one step removed. The person-size picture looks distinctly worn, not unlike the ordinary metal door on which it hangs.