

Born of Scrap



Angel Otero, a dynamic artist of Puerto Rican origin has taken the New York art scene by storm. His inherent Latino passion fuels his artistic vision and unique perspective on painting. He peels off dry oil paint, sprays paint on it and then creates fascinating collages. From still life to abstract art, all of Otero's creations have a sensory, physical element to them

By Riaan J. George

Your style is quite unique. Tell us more about it.

Dry oil paint is the leitmotif of my creations. I construct paintings using dry oil paint. This style of painting, which I started when I was fresh out of school, is very dear to me. The idea of using the paint this way came when I tried to scrape the paint off from paintings that I didn't like, to create new ones. I found myself with a mountain of dry paint. I wasn't too clear about what kind of imagery I wanted to construct and was more interested in the process rather than the stories behind it. None of these paintings are about stories or narratives. They are not about the why but the how.

Tell us about the technique.

I started taking pieces of dry paint, spray painting them and then cutting and using them. When you look at it, you see it all wrinkled because it is compressed paint. It might appear like fabric but it isn't. I select the still life style for several reasons.

I like tables and flowers and hence, it becomes very personal. Also, historically, a lot of artworks have been created in the still life genre. I wanted to have that dialogue between the conventional and the unconventional; a conversation with the historical context of oil painting. These are



Facing page: Artist Angel Otero is known for his unique dry oil paintings **Above:** Blooming Gold