

Artist Statement

In 2023, during my first admission to psych detox for alcohol withdrawal, I rediscovered art. What began as feverish drawings of the human form—an attempt to survive the collapse of addiction—has since evolved into a sustained painting practice. My recent work in oil captures the turbulence of early sobriety: trauma surfacing, memory fracturing, and the urgent search for equilibrium. I use movement and color to press these cycles of anguish and release into the canvas, where gesture becomes both wound and repair. The paintings stand in dialogue with American abstraction but carry a distinctly personal charge: they are not abstractions for abstraction's sake, but lived records of recovery. Each canvas is a confrontation with survival, a space where chaos is given structure and despair is held in form. My aim is to bring viewers into this terrain—to offer a visceral encounter with the struggle and resilience of addiction, and to locate, within the storm, a hard-won stillness. —Joshua Michael Schwartz