

CUT OUT Paintings In 2005 I decided to cut up many of the paintings I had completed over the previous four years. I collaged different sections of the old paintings together to form new, shaped paintings. In this way, I released the marks and forms from the confines of the rectangle that had penned them in.

In the previous two years I had undergone two major medical procedures that brought back memories of other surgeries from childhood. These associations were about things leaving their normal context, cut out in some instances, rearranged in others. Cutting and rearranging were operations I was performing on my paintings, and though the parallel seemed like a coincidence at the time, it didn't end up feeling that way. During long periods of recovery I was aware of my physical and mental energy slowly regenerating. These shaped paintings mark the joyful feeling of renewed vitality, and my efforts to get the body's energetic sheath onto the canvas. The idea of the energetic sheath comes from the yoga concept of the "subtle body," according to which the material body tries to become a graceful mark in space. Yoga and trapeze are my two bodily pursuits; they carry opposite connotations - balanced stability on one hand, hurtling momentum on the other - but I try to make my visual art responsive to both. What trapeze and yoga have in common for me is their imposition of strict constraints on the body. There is one precise way to work a pose, one best way to perform a trapeze trick. And yet these rigid protocols for what the body should do bring an experience of freedom. For the trained body there is no conflict between discipline and freedom. And so, inspired by both activities, I've tried to make colored marks that report the hand's open and natural gesture while also feeling inevitable, with each line appearing just where it was supposed to.

DIFFERENT ANATOMY Drawings

The works on paper in this series carry forward the idea of cutting up former paintings and rearranging their parts. I have cut shapes from former watercolor and gouache drawings, and reassembled them over photocopied ink drawings of different anatomical parts. The resulting images bridge the gap between the oil paintings in "Cut Out," and the acrylic paintings in "Different Anatomy" for which they serve as studies.

LANDSCAPES AND STILL LIVES OF THE VITAL BODY Paintings

These paintings take off from illustrations in medical textbooks, as a way of capturing the vitality of the body's internal organs, and their liberation from their normal context. Organs are always thought of in terms of the job they perform for the body's sake. An organ is a tool that works for a purpose, and the purpose is the whole larger body it's in. As a result the organ is not respected for its own sake. In a way, the organ is set free when it's taken out of the body, because then at last it isn't being defined relative to the job it's doing. For me, re-organized organs carry associations of things leaving their normal contexts. "She has different anatomy," is a phrase I kept hearing from doctors in the hospital, especially after undergoing a third surgical procedure. In liberating the organs from their normal place and purpose, I have tried to capture their vitality and lightness. I have also altered their anatomical structure, as the doctors did with my own insides. Beautified, stylized, and rendered in a vivid palette, their shapes take on the likeness of an orchid, a tree, a car engine, a bit of plumbing, a piece of architecture,

fragments of a stained glass window. Suspended against a backdrop of transparently primed canvas, paint's way of holding light feels especially suited to these organ shapes: they seem struck by the light, again as if they've suddenly been brought out from inside a body.