

THESE COLOURS DON'T RUN PART I

London-based artist Alexander James paints his interpretation of the world both abstractly and figuratively. Fascinated by colour, Alexander delicately fuses the emotive expressions of his subjects with intriguing concepts.

James was obsessed with the amount of colour and patterns that could be fitted onto canvas. Alexander wanted to use this to express his own worldview by creating figures filled with the colours and patterns of his imagination.

In addition to painting, Alexander finds that music captures the essence of his vision in an emotive and evocative manner. This led to the formation of 'Roots by The Oder', a vinyl-only record label and art project set up by Alexander James and Berlin-based UK producer Mculo. Both artists created a collaborative and multidisciplinary format bringing together their distinct experiences and cultural influences stemming from living in different cities and being artists specialising in different mediums. Alexander uses a variation of techniques – including charcoal drawings and videography – inspired by Mculo's techno music.

'Roots By The Oder' curated their first exhibition at Keith Bar, Schillerpromenade, Berlin, to showcase their collaboration of music and art. Alexander presented his charcoal work (including the one used on the front of the vinyl sleeve), as well as painting different subject matters which represented poignant moments in his life.

Branching out from his collaboration, Alexander James began on his next venture, 'These Colours Don't Run'. James enjoyed being playful with videos – pausing, playing and re-playing scenes and, in particular, people's expressions. This created a beautiful yet dysfunctional image comprised of a variety of colours, entwined with each other and yet oddly controlled. This inspired Alexander's process of painting in which he envisages an empty canvas as a jolted screen or a paused video – freely throwing colours, patterns, and shapes into an organised mess. This in turn led to Alexander creating videos of his work.

Alexander James says: *"I wanted to combine the two – painting and a moving image. Recently a friend and videographer recorded me painting onto two large canvases. The recording was 48 hours long, but we sat through the whole 'film' – pausing, rewinding and picking certain aspects of my painting and layering it with footage I felt inspired by. The result was a jolted and controlled aesthetic, which I can then portray in my paintings. This is a completely new avenue that I can't wait to explore further."*

Feelings of childhood nostalgia played an important role whilst exploring colour. Alexander learnt about the Native Americans from his grandfather, who was a massive influence in his life and used to regularly make him watch black-and-white Native American films. His grandfather pointed out that each

colour had a special symbolism – different colours represented distinct tribes and identities. Alexander was curious as to why certain tribes picked a specific colour and why tribal outfits were designed in particular ways. There were lots of unanswered questions that Alexander was intrigued by.

Alexander adds: *“I love the idea of being part of a group where you are only represented by colour and patterns. Each Native American tribe had a distinctive look to intentionally stand out. Through this, I have created my own uniform and signature by combining colours for people to wear in a variety of colours and patterns, superimposed onto items of clothing, designed to capture their identity.”*

‘These Colours Don’t Run’ is an expression of Alexander James’ interpretation of colour. People show their true colours in everyday situations - whether it is dressing differently or acting out in a particular way. By painting, Alexander James wanted to explore the concept of emotional expression through colour and in particular its role in Native American culture. The project also experiments with moving image in order to create new ways of combining colours, which is a huge inspiration behind Alexander James’s work.

-ENDS-

Notes To Editors

Alexander James presents ‘These Colours Don’t Run’ at Carousel London, 71 Blandford Street, London, W1U 8AB, running from 1st September – 23rd September, 2016.

Alexander James

Email: info@alexander-james.com

Instagram: @alexanderjamesx

Facebook: Alexander James

<http://www.alexander-james.com/>

Carousel London