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Eull, Cory. *Sliding Into Entropy: Rema Ghuloum, "Day After Day"*. MPLS Art, October 19, 2025.



Rema Ghuloum
Awakening, 2025
Oil and acrylic gouache on canvas
48 x 54 in
121.9 x 137.2 cm

Each painting acting as a touch tree, Rema Ghuloum's daily, ritualistic practice provides a documentation of time and presence. In her series *Day After Day*, Ghuloum welcomes the viewer into lapses of tension and release, and lapses of additive abandon balanced by mindful deduction.

In each painting, there is a layering and stratification of information. She starts all paintings in a series simultaneously. With each piece laid horizontally on the floor, she pours acrylic gouache onto the canvases via buckets, spray bottles, or squeeze bottles.

"It's really about trying to create different speeds, and an active ground with a specific palette," Ghuloum says. Treating the material like watercolor, she starts manipulating the surface by tilting the canvases and disturbing the material.

In a piece like *Awakening*, residue from this initial stage of pouring can be spotted. Up to this point in a given work, Ghuloum has worked fairly swiftly, but at this stage she begins to slow, assessing what foundation exists in each piece.

Ghuloum revisits the paintings every day, and at the end of each day's session, she applies whatever dregs of paint are left on the palette to the edge of the canvas, tallying and archiving the considered colors.

Because of the way Ghuloum archives the palette's history onto the border of each piece, there is a funneling of attention into the painting, and the border can be deciphered like a score or legend to see the sequence in which the painting was made.

"The edges reinforce the fact that they're just paintings, and I'm always thinking about this play. There's a contrast, like discordance, it's not this and it's not that," Ghuloum says. "You can come closer and a whole world is revealed, and come further away and see that it's an object." This pulling, tugging sensation can be experienced with a piece like *Facade (shadow)*, where the viewer's vision is tunneled toward the center of the piece. There is a natural flow, or current, inward.

Mimicking the physical process of entropy, sanding is an instrumental part of Ghuloum's painting process. Once each layer of paint is dry, she hand sands the entire canvas with a fine-grit sandpaper.

"My hand is physically in it and it also removes one very thin layer of the surface, and what that does is it makes a memory or a history in the painting," she says. "They start communicating something that feels like involuntary memory."

Ghuloum is a Reiki practitioner and accustomed to the hands-on nature of healing. Sanding is a way of treating the whole surface the same, like a body, while also steering the topography of each piece. Reaching a place of equanimity, presence, and temporality, sanding requires a detachment to what layer is painted onto the surface. She says her "process is the parameter, and everything else is open," which means coming back to the ritual action of sanding provides an anchor within the intuitive landscape of her work.

Looking at pieces such as *Facade (7am)*, *Facade (pink)*, and *Facade (2am)*, history undoubtedly asserts itself on the canvas, but the days in the studio

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Rema Ghuloum
Facade (2 AM), 2025
Oil and acryla-gouache on canvas
17 x 23 in
43.2 x 58.4 cm

have melded alongside the paint, and time has become indiscernible.

"My paintings often look really ethereal, and a lot of times people write about my work in that way, but when you look at them up close, they're coarse, and there's a felt grittiness to them," she says.

Color and surface build the foundation for Ghuloum's work, yet each painting is an energetic memorial, and an abstraction that is felt. Getting lost in liminality whilst remaining grounded, Ghuloum's practice is one of commitment, and of ritualistically making her mark. But ultimately, it's one of allowing for coalescence, and then allowing for letting go.