

RUSSO ▲ LEE GALLERY

Artist Statement

"Abstraction"

This series of paintings explores still lifes discovered in everyday encounters, from my home and studio to vibrant world produce markets in Italy and Mexico. These scenes offer a visual feast of form and color, where nature's abundance becomes a point of departure for abstraction. Through these works, I aim to distill what feels essential, and to interpret the familiar with a refined visual language rooted in observation and intuition.

My chosen subjects range from market stalls brimming with organic repetition to personal objects imbued with memory and story: a pair of my well-worn shiny black pumps, my husband's grandfather's brogues, a necktie from my beloved brother, a seldom-worn black velvet hat, and a collected vintage vase. These objects are not only familiar, they are deeply personal, talismans of life lived and relationships cherished.

One day, I noticed my shoes lying in a curious gesture on the floor. That spontaneous moment sparked a growing fascination with "Pumps and Brogues"—paintings that explore pairings, separations, and anthropomorphic suggestions. These still lifes evoke human presence, traditional gender roles, physicality, and nostalgia.

Light plays a vital role in my compositions. Reflections off glossy surfaces create patterns that echo the colors and shapes of their surroundings. I chose to limit the backgrounds using a palette of mostly red, an emotional connection with the feminine lipstick colors of my youth. Red also serves as a color range with unlimited analogous variations, bringing a history of intense associations.

Formally, these paintings investigate abstraction through shape, color, and spatial relationships. I work to render objects in a way that both reveals and disrupts illusion, using the two-dimensional surface to explore depth, tension, and harmony.

My inspirations are rooted in a lineage of artists who have redefined how we see:

- **Wayne Thiebaud**, for his dedication to the beauty of everyday objects and his belief that whether abstract or realistic, all painting is about relationships—of form, color, and perception.
- **Georgia O'Keeffe**, who translated the observed world through imagination, heightening our appreciation of visual beauty.
- **Giorgio Morandi**, whose arrangements turn the familiar into quiet dramas of space and form.
- **Artemisia Gentileschi**, a heroic figure and role model—whose perseverance and talent broke barriers in the art world of her time.

Sherrie Wolf - 2025

Russo ▲ Lee Gallery, Inc.

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