

Minimal, empty, unpainted: these are words we would use to describe David Ostrowski's paintings. Their blank surfaces, failed gestures and jarring colors appear "unpainted" and cold upon first glance.

Standing in front of one of these large paintings however, the romantic intentions behind these works begins to come into focus. The "unpainted" line of spray paint becomes the aborted gesture of a 21st century German studio painter who uses the medium because of it's inherent spontaneity. Anything can happen between the nozzle of spray can and the canvas. The footprints on the otherwise untreated canvases of the *Footsie* paintings are portraits of the artist's muses, an intimate peak into the women who fill his life and studio and the beauty he finds in their feet.

Ostrowski often refers to pop culture pillars like *Seinfeld* or *Between Two Ferns*, creating a context of irony and humor for his work to live in. Perhaps an even more fitting reference for the viewer could be *Sliding Doors*, the early 2000's RomCom film about chance, romance and the lack control we have over our daily lives.

At the end of his studies under Albert Oehlen at the Akademie in Düsseldorf, Ostrowski lost almost every painting he ever made due to a devastating electrical fire in his studio. Every labored painting, layer after layer of tedious oil paint mixed and applied painstakingly with brushes, perfectly treated canvases, gone in a instant. The only thing left to show for all of these years of effort and study was a single surviving canvas, raw except the shadow of the stretcher bars painted in soot by the flames of the fire. Ultimate failure, endless possibilities.

It's exhilarating to think that there is opportunity in failure, liberating to believe there is beauty in raw materials and romantic to immortalize a muse in a fleeting footstep, preserved and exhibited for all to see.

For Ostrowski's second solo exhibition, *Romantic Paintings*, at Peres Projects the artist will present a new body of works from his ongoing F series.

*David Ostrowski (b. 1981, Cologne, lives/works, Cologne), completed his studies at the Kunstakademie Dusseldorf in 2009. In September 2014, he will have a large solo exhibition in Turin at the Fondazione Sandretto re Rebaudengo. He will also exhibit in the group exhibition, Beware Wet Paint, curated by Gregor Muir, at the Institute of Contemporary Art, London, which will then travel to the Fondazione Sandretto re Rebaudengo.*