

Henry Curchod

*Artist Spotlight: Henry Churchod*  
R&F, October 2023  
1/7



Artist Henry Curchod. Image credit: Scott Stirling

We chatted recently with [2023 artist-in-residence Henry Curchod](#) about his time at Brown Pink in August. He was honest about both the challenges and benefits of solitude, and of doing an artist residency. We found the conversation interesting and hope you do too.

Born in 1992 in Palo Alto, CA, Henry earned his BFA from the University of New South Wales. An early encounter with Persian miniature painting prompted an interest in figurative art that persists today.

Influenced by his Western upbringing and Iranian heritage, Henry's paintings are alive with turmoil and energy. Drawing is key to Henry's work. He begins by sketching lightly with oil stick, followed by turpentine-dipped brushes that are pushed into the gestural marks, with final charcoal lines bringing greater clarity to the figures.

Henry has had solo exhibitions in Australia, New Zealand, England, the United States, and the Philippines. Later this year he will have his first solo show in Paris. He was a finalist for both The Ramsay Prize and The Sulman Prize in Australia. In addition to being selected for a residency at Brown Pink, he has done the PPP/Oostmeijer residency in The Netherlands.

Henry Curchod

*Artist Spotlight: Henry Churchod*  
R&F, October 2023  
2/7



*Trouble on the event horizon* installation view. Image credit: Mamoth.

**Please tell us a little bit about your experience as an artist in residence at Brown Pink. What were you planning to work on and how did that change when you got there?**

Initially I'd planned to make a sort of scroll, just one roll of linen where the work over the residency kind of meandered chronologically, but from right to left. This is something I'd been wanting to do for a while.

## Henry Curchod

*Artist Spotlight: Henry Churchod*  
R&F, October 2023  
3/7

But I had a serious bicycle crash in France a few weeks prior, which left me temporarily disabled with no movement in my left hand due to a wrist fracture, so my plans for the residency kind of disintegrated. I decided to take it one day at a time. I brought ten rectangular canvases to allow maximum mobility across the surface in spite of my condition.

Ultimately, I found the solitude very helpful in reinvigorating my practice after my accident. The live/work arrangement forced me to work from dusk until dawn each day, allowing myself the pleasure of severely overworking things.



Studio portrait. Image credit: Vladimir Kravchenko.

**Were you able to experiment with new materials? Or were you already familiar with R&F Pigment Sticks?**

I was broadly familiar with Pigment Sticks, but the freedom of the residency meant I could indulge in them in ways I had not before. I applied them much heavier, finding new dimensions in the surface and playing with the range of effects that could be achieved with the high-quality pigments.

I typically work with a mixture of oil stick products from other companies, as well as R&F, but restricting my materials in this way meant that the works achieved a vibrance that was at times spectacular and other times overwhelming. When necessary I managed to pull back and find a way to subdue them, mostly through light application and leaving the linen more bare than I usually do.

Henry Curchod

*Artist Spotlight: Henry Churchod*  
R&F, October 2023  
4/7



*It has been my doorway to perception and the house that I live in, 2023. Image credit: Mammoth. (This piece was created during Henry's residency at Brown Pink.)*

**Do you see yourself continuing to use these for future projects? Any breakthroughs in terms of your own work?**

I have always used Pigment Sticks and I do not see that changing in the near future. I must say that since the residency I have been using them more. I did discover that using the Blending Medium with Drier was extremely helpful in reducing drying time and I have adopted that technique in my practice.

Henry Curchod

*Artist Spotlight: Henry Churchod*  
R&F, October 2023  
5/7



*Unnatural disasters, 2023. Image credit: Mamoth.*

**Can you share a highlight of your residency? What makes doing a residency like the one at Brown Pink a worthwhile experience for an artist?**

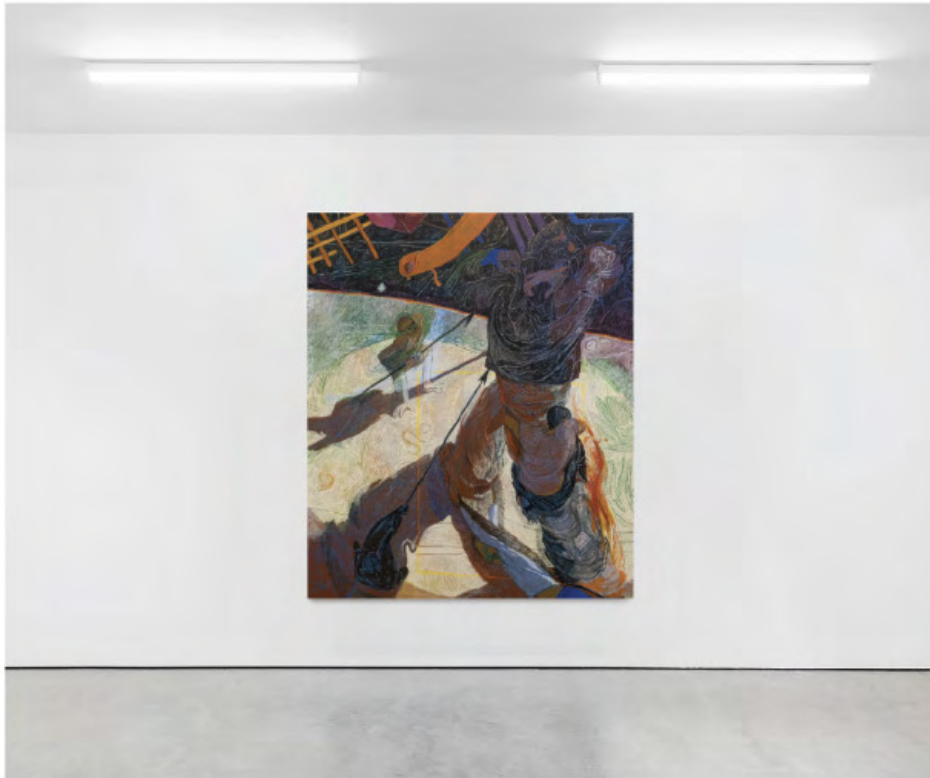
It wasn't a holiday. I think it's important to acknowledge that I personally find residencies to be complex and disruptive experiences — in both good and bad ways. There is a sense of anticipation and expectation. You arrive to a new studio and a new home with new smells, appliances, sheets, tools, and materials.

I am always reminded of how important a sense of routine and familiarity can be to art making. Then you are alone and quickly manufacture comfort and deep dive into your practice. Residencies isolate the artistic process so that there is nowhere to hide. The pressure of making the most of my experience left me to question almost every aspect of my practice. This is a good thing, but it can also be frustrating and painful.

I enjoyed exploring the Kingston area and found the sense of community very encouraging. Ultimately it was an extremely valuable exercise.

Henry Curchod

*Artist Spotlight: Henry Churchod*  
R&F, October 2023  
6/7



*Animals*, 2022. Image credit: Mamoth.

**Did you bring reading materials to support your residency or take advantage of the many galleries and museums in the Hudson River Valley?**

I'm embarrassed to say I didn't do a whole lot of reading because I was working so much that when I wasn't working, I was cooking, eating, and sleeping. I had just finished *Against The Written Word* by Ian Svenonius, which is an anthology of satirical essays. I recommend it. Other than that I only visited Dia Beacon, which is hardly inspiring as a painter, but was an enjoyable excursion nonetheless.

**Why is solitude necessary for artists?**

I am not sure I enjoy intense solitude that much, but I can appreciate its benefits. I enjoy community and laughter and the lightness of frequent social interaction. For me, solitude is like eating healthy and exercising — I force myself into it because I know how beneficial it can be. It is important to take time to reflect and experience perspectival change.

Henry Curchod

*Artist Spotlight: Henry Churchod*

R&F, October 2023

7/7



*Doctor hard love*, 2023. Image credit: Mamoth. (This piece was created during Henry's residency at Brown Pink.)

**Anything else you'd like to share?**

In a way I wish I hadn't worked so much... and maybe I was using work to distract myself from being truly alone. It was a fantastic experience and could not recommend it enough, especially for anybody who already loves to use the materials.