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Didier William on Painting a Revolution

In his large two-part exhibition, the queer Haitian-American artist centers the body, which figures in his work both literally and figuratively.

By Hrag Vartanian
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It's rare for an artist to have two concurrent solo shows in the same city, but Didier William accomplished that with his *Curtains, Stages, and Shadows, Act 1 & Act 2*. The two-part exhibition explores the formal and narrative possibilities of painting. In his review of Act 1, critic Seph Rodney focuses on the figures that can appear as elusive as they are powerful, writing:

These are all figures ready to enact real violence with the cutlasses, and they are also figures who are depicted as staging a rebellion. If one views the text in the back room, one can begin to understand why William believes it necessary to pictorially rehearse the action of insurrection.

I invited Rodney to continue the conversation with William in this episode of Art Movements, in which the two explore the visual language of revolution, specifically in the context of the Haitian revolution, which is one of the larger themes in the artist's series.

Listen to the Podcast here: <https://hyperallergic.simplecast.com/episodes/didier-william-on-painting-a-revolution>