

PATRICIA PEREZ EUSTAQUIO AT TYLER ROLLINS FINE ART

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The 12 graphite-on-paper works here from Patricia Perez Eustaquio's "Black Dust" series line the walls of Tyler Rollins gallery like the jagged peaks of a mountain range. A rocky outcropping reaches up from the bottom of each 40-by-30-inch sheet of paper. Crevasses are drawn in deep, obsidian black; faint wispy lines fade into the white background like snowdrifts blowing off into the ether. In some, patches of gold leaf streak across the paper, suggesting bolts of lightning or rays of sun piercing a glacial mountaintop.

It's surprising, then, given the majesty of the compositions, to discover that the drawings are actually of the dried flowers and hardened lumps of paint that lie around the artist's studio. Eustaquio, who often uses commonplace materials to draw on themes of craft and decay, has here limited her subject matter to what is readily available: the residue of past creative processes littering her workplace.

Once it becomes apparent, the authority of the mountainous shapes dissolves. Forms that appear to be solid stone are in fact fragile, paper-thin petals that look as if they might crumble to dust. Massive ice caps are actually small calcified droplets of pigment, thoughtlessly strewn, and apparent odes to nature's power become mournful reflections on creation and the deterioration of nature's material.

Yet, by capturing the by-products of her practice, Eustaquio's elegiac drawings memorialize the smallest scraps, even champion them, making mountains of them. We might even be able to read them as plans for future projects—the graphite and gold, as potential materials for sculptural versions of the craggy forms—and for a new life.



Patricia Perez Eustaquio, *Black Dust VI*, 2015, graphite and gold leaf on Hahnemühle acid-free paper, 40 x 30 inches.
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