



Nick McPhail, *Entry*
May 26, 2023 - July 15, 2023

Massey Klein Gallery is pleased to present *Entry*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by Nick McPhail. The exhibition will be on view from May 26th through July 15th. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, June 3 from 4-7pm. This is the artist's first exhibition with the gallery. For press inquiries or questions regarding works available, please email info@masseyklein.com.

At first seemingly straightforward in subject and presentation, painter Nick McPhail's landscape-based and architecturally-inspired paintings propel the viewer into previously unacknowledged realms of meditation, inner contemplation, and perception. The artist's deceptively simple works weave everyday components of our peripheries into rich and enigmatic moments of memories, ideas, emotions, and limitless possibilities. The empty expanses and quiet scenes are quintessential of his work and allow him to stray from strictly realistic representations and rather hint at it with vague association. McPhail's emphasis on the simpleness of the things one sees though rarely acknowledges encourages the viewer to pause and examine their perception of the world around them.

As a painter, draftsman, and ceramicist, McPhail draws upon elements from every facet of his practice, giving equal importance to each technique and allowing one to inform the other. In addition, the artist's process blends traditional painting techniques with contemporary experimentation, resulting in a unique amalgamation of textures, compositions and colors. The distinct luminosity of McPhail's paintings are a result of his adaption of *underpainting*, a Renaissance invention that involved an initial monochromatic layer of paint imbuing the subsequent layers with an unprecedented glow. McPhail challenges the technique by selecting neon orange, pink, red, or yellow as his monochromatic layer, then adds and subtracts transparent layers of oil paint in a way that seamlessly blends traditional luminosity and modern geometric and chromatic detail.

While McPhail's paintings can be described as distinctly representational, architectural elements are featured to establish a familiar minimalism in his works. The artist's source imagery comes primarily from Los Angeles, with additional inspiration taken from Texas, Florida, and greater California area. The stories behind architectural elements are what interest the artist the most, and these questions are presented and explored in his paintings. How does architecture interact over time with the natural world? How do different occupants affect how architecture is experienced? Most importantly, how is architecture embedded in our memories and how does this differ based on an individual's interaction with the space?

The artist's use of color is specifically inspired by Los Angeles, where a collision of cool pastel and bright neon tones occur at every turn. A fundamental component of the artist's practice are his long exploratory walks, taking photographs along the way that are then used to organize preliminary compositions while staging and rearranging relationships between objects. This collage-like experimentation extends well into his painting process, relied upon to show and conceal certain elements, overlaying and overlapping to explore the ways in which color, light and texture can interact.

McPhail's incorporation of scenic fragments and architectural elements, his commitment to carefully planned compositions that then embrace organic manipulation, and his fearless use of brushes, pencils, and palette knives to apply oil paint, watercolor and paper collage, result in finished paintings that are extensions of realities rather than depictions of existing places. They exist to compel the viewer to be present in a moment of recognition and to be increasingly aware of what exists around them.

Nick McPhail graduated with a BFA with a focus in Painting and Ceramics from Michigan State University in 2006. He has participated in numerous artist residencies, including those at Untitled_1983 in Geneva, Switzerland in 2019; the Holiday Forever Residency in Jackson, WY in 2019; Ochi Gallery in Ketchum, ID in 2019; 100 West Corsicana in Corsicana, TX in 2018; and the Vermont Studio Center in Johnson, VT in 2017. The artist has previously exhibited internationally in both solo and group exhibitions. Notable solo exhibitions include those at Amélie Maison d'Art in Paris, Ochi Projects in Los Angeles, Untitled_1983 in Geneva, Holiday in Los Angeles, Mina Dresden in San Francisco and the Kresge Art Center in East Lansing, MI, to name a few. McPhail's work has been included in group exhibitions in cities such as Düsseldorf, Arles, Berlin, Stockholm, Geneva, Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles and New York City. In 2019, the artist's commissioned public work, *Power Lines*, was permanently installed on Sunset Boulevard in Echo Park (measuring 12 feet by 10 feet and painted in acrylic on aluminum).

The artist and his work have been published in noteworthy publications including *Literary Hub*, *Wrap Magazine*, *The American Scholar*, *New American Paintings*, *Art Now LA*, *Booooooom*, *Art Maze Magazine*, *Contemporary Art Review Los Angeles*, *Two Coats of Paint*, *San Francisco Chronicle* and *Art Business*. The artist lives and works in Los Angeles.