



Faris McReynolds & Luke Whittlatch: *Echo These Words to Strangers*

June 14-July 27, 2024

Opening Reception, June 14, 6-8 PM



Tracey Morgan Gallery is pleased to present *Echo These Words to Strangers*, a two-person exhibition of paintings by Faris McReynolds & Luke Whittlatch. This is our first exhibition with McReynolds, and our second with Whittlatch. An opening reception is scheduled for Friday, June 14 from 6 to 8 PM.

Stylistically, this exhibition spans from the precision-heavy abstraction of Whittlatch, to the expressive figuration of McReynolds.

While the work may be aesthetically quite different, the two artists share a rebellious intention behind their practices, mining ideas of real and imagined spaces rendered on medium and small-scale canvases.

Luke Whittlatch paints what he calls “portraits of the subconscious” and explores “the human urge to see the unseen.” Highly influenced by his upbringing in Wyoming, his paintings are representations of the myths and storytelling prevalent in the Western region of the U.S., in combination with the storytelling of the Appalachian region he now calls home. Visually, his soft, blended backgrounds are punctuated by crisp lines cutting across the canvas, reminiscent of a dream state interrupted by reality.

Much of Faris McReynolds’ work straddles the line between figuration and abstraction, focusing more on the energy and movements of his subjects than on the subjects themselves. His recent paintings weave together ideas of leisure and chaos, utilizing a snap-shot aesthetic to look at how humans exist together in shared spaces, often by showing abstracted bodies in pastoral landscapes. The work is impulsive and intuitive as McReynolds’ gestural strokes and vibrant colors lend a sense of urgency and energy while maintaining a feeling of calm and relaxation.

With a friendship and individual art practices that date back over 25 years, the two artists have shared a painting studio more than once, played in bands together, and been next-door neighbors. Mutual influence from this long-standing relationship is inevitable, and a shift in the recent work from each artist shows their previously divergent work moving closer together; with this, the time felt apt to explore these notable overlaps in a joint exhibition.

Faris McReynolds is a Los Angeles-based artist and musician. His paintings have been shown in solo exhibitions around the world and have been featured in *Details*, *Art Papers*, *Flash Art Magazine*, *Tema Celeste*, and *ArtWeek*. McReynolds grew up in Richardson, Texas, a suburb of Dallas, the son of an Indian-American mother and American father. He spent his childhood between Texas and Bombay, and appeared in the 1985 Bollywood movie *Shahadat* when he was eight. From 1990-1998, he played bass guitar in Dallas based skate-punk band *Family Values*. During that time, they toured the American Southwest. He started publicly showing his paintings in 1998, and in 2000, he received his BFA from Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles.

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Luke Whittlatch received a BFA from Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA in 2001 and is a recipient of the Baldessari Award. His work has been exhibited at numerous national venues including shows in Los Angeles, New York City, and Wyoming. His work has been published in the Columbia Art and Literature Review, Huffington Post, Modern Painters, and Voyage LA. He currently lives and works in Asheville, NC.

All image requests and press-related inquiries, contact china@traceymorgangallery.com

Top image (left) Faris McReynolds, *Break*, 2024, oil on canvas, 9 x 12 inches

Top image (right) Luke Whittlatch, *Toast to Telegraph Hill*, 2024, oil, acrylic and dye on linen, 24 x 18 inches

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