

Olivia Hill

Strike-Slip

July 23 - September 17, 2022

Opening reception Saturday, July 23, 6-9pm

For her first solo exhibition at Bel Ami, Olivia Hill's paintings of the local landscape are both observant and odd; her brightly-lit desert scenes look accurate yet otherworldly. *Strike-Slip* describes the precarious tilt of the San Andreas faultline. Here it also hints at the constant filming and framing of Los Angeles, the building and dismantling (to strike a set), and the slippage that occurs in acts of representation, or even in memory: the harder one tries to recall something, the more slippage occurs.

Referencing her own photos and screenshots of aerial images from Google Earth, Hill evinces the outdoor environment through a combination of strategies. Tightly rendered formations in pictorial space are layered in among expressive painterly marks that activate the material surface of the canvas. Like a film set, from a distance the scene coheres, but closer viewing reveals ruptures in the illusion: swaths of sandy medium, spray paint and splatter, fomenting swirls of pigment and mineral spirits, stamped on leaf patterns, and impasto built up to form a consistently disturbed world.

In Hill's landscapes the harmonies, the dissonance, and exploitative quality of our exchange with the earth emerges. Most of Hill's paintings can be traced to actual locations—a longitude and latitude is often cited in the title of the work—although their very indexicality draws attention to subjective perceptions of nature in the social imaginary. Working from images with limited data, in recreating a scene Hill freely intervenes with her own inventive associations. She chooses sites with a track record of human engineering: the snowmaking pond on Mammoth Mountain, the man-made Bronson Caves, an astronaut's footprint on the moon. Just as the so-called wilderness is carved and imprinted with ideologies and myth, Olivia Hill's paintings are confabulations. It is their closeness to the truth that is unexpectedly surreal.

If there are notes of nostalgia or romance in Hill's paintings, they are treated as just some of the promises staked in the canyons over time. Places once advertised as paradise are now inhospitable. The dystopic slant has been capitalized upon too; myriad noir and sci-fi films and TV shows have been shot here. Most of Southern California has been reimagined and usurped. This landscape has crumbled and been reconfigured so many times that a cool breeze from the ocean can come as a surprise. In LA, corroded by a history of poor city planning, it's a relief to encounter a piece of public infrastructure that functions for people in the community. A concrete picnic table scribbled with spray paint is a relic, and a stage, and a place to sit and eat a sandwich while one contemplates the relative scale of things in the universe.

Olivia Hill (b. 1985, Hinsdale, Illinois) lives and works between Los Angeles and Yucca Valley. Hill received an MFA from University of California, Riverside (2020) and a BFA from San Francisco Art Institute (2006). Recent exhibitions include *A Fool's Game Played By Cowards* at As It Stands, Los Angeles, CA (curated by Kinder, NY with Aria Dean) (2022); *A Somewhat Thin Line* at In Lieu Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (2022); *Psycho Geology* at Bendix Building, Los Angeles, CA (curated by Anna Elise Johnson) (2022); and *No Matter What*, MFA thesis exhibition at JOAN, Los Angeles, CA (2021).

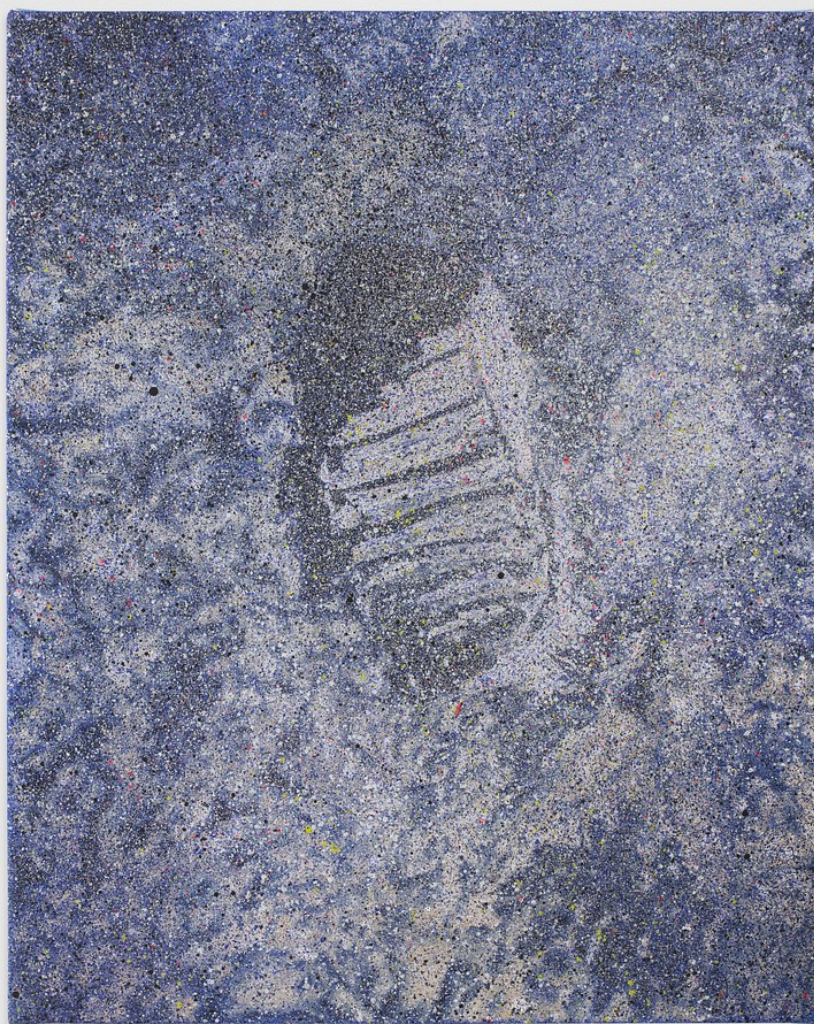


Olivia Hill

Cave Painting, Bronson Caves 34°07'17.4N 118°18'51.9W, 2022

Oil and acrylic on canvas

48 x 36 in (121.9 x 91.4 cm)



Olivia Hill

Man on the Moon -00.57,023.49 E, 2022

Oil on canvas

20 x 16 in (50.8 x 40.6 cm)



Olivia Hill

Mammoth Mountain Looking South 37°37'48.7N 119°01'35.7W, 2022

Oil on canvas

24 x 30 in (61 x 76.2 cm)



Olivia Hill

View Point on Angeles Crest HWY 34°13'43.5N 118°10'58.4W, 2022

Oil on canvas

60 x 72 in (152.4 x 182.9 cm)



Olivia Hill

Man in the Moon 40°N 25.00°E, 2022

Oil on canvas

20 x 16 in (50.8 x 40.6 cm)



Olivia Hill

Tire Mark in Yucca Valley 34°12'27.9N 116°26'17.2W, 2022

Oil on canvas

20 x 16 in (50.8 x 40.6 cm)



Olivia Hill

Bat Cave in Bronson Canyon, 2020

Oil on Canvas

48 x 60 in (121.9 x 152.4 cm)



Olivia Hill

Pool in La Cañada 34°13'08.0N 118°10'58.0W, 2022

Oil on canvas

14 x 11 in (35.5 x 28 cm)



Olivia Hill

Palimpsest, Nightmare Rock 36°35'47.3N 118°05'54.4W, 2022

Oil, acrylic, Sharpie on canvas

48 x 36 in (121.9 x 91.4 cm)



Olivia Hill

Picnic Table in Debs Park 34°05'25.0N 118°11'40.0W, 2022

Oil on canvas

30 x 24 in (76.2 x 61 cm)



Olivia Hill

When the Bloom of the Jacaranda Tree is Here, Christmas Time is Near, Picnic table in Elysian Park, 2022

Oil on canvas

30 x 24 in (76.2 x 61 cm)



Olivia Hill

*No Snow, No Problem, Mammoth Mountain Facing Northwest 37°37'57.0N
119°01'25.0W, 2022*

Oil on canvas

48 x 60 in (121.9 x 152.4 cm)

OLIVIA HILL

CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION:

(2020) MFA in Studio Art, University of California, Riverside.

(2006) BFA in Painting, San Francisco Art Institute

SELECTED ART EXHIBITIONS:

SOLO:

(2022) *Strike-Slip* at Bel Ami, Los Angeles

(2019) *Can't Wrap My Head Around It* at Phyllis Gill Gallery, UC Riverside

(2016) *Holocenia* at The Red Arrow Gallery Nashville

(2015) *The SilverSeed Project* at Channel to Channel Gallery, Nashville

(2012) *American Ghost* at LeMieux Gallery, New Orleans

(2009) *Square Roots* at LeMieux Gallery, New Orleans

(2008) *Finish the Story* at Homespace Gallery, New Orleans

GROUP:

(2022) *A Somewhat Thin Line* at In Lieu Gallery, Los Angeles

A Fool's Game Played By Cowards at As It Stands, Los Angeles, curated by Kinder, NY with Aria Dean

Psycho Geology at Bendix Building, Los Angeles, curated by Anna Elise Johnson

(2021) *No Matter What*, MFA thesis exhibition at JOAN, Los Angeles

It's Always Night Or We Wouldn't Need Light at The Clinic, Los Angeles

(2019) 1st and 2nd Year Show- Riverside Art Museum

(2011) *Westscape* at Untitled Art Projects, Los Angeles, Ca

(2010) *The Saratoga Collection* at The Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans

Growing Pains at LeMieux Gallery, New Orleans

(2006) *Tavyrn of the Beast* at The Diego Rivera Gallery, San Francisco Art Institute

PUBLICATION:

(2015) Featured article in October issue of "Nashville Arts Magazine"

(2009) Review of "Square Roots" solo exhibition - January issue of "Art Voices Magazine"

Review in September issue of New Orleans Times Picayune