

# HALSEY MCKAY GALLERY

## MATTHEW KIRK - *WHITE SNAKE*

January 14 - March 26 | 79 Newtown Lane, East Hampton, NY

For all further information please contact [info@halseymckay.com](mailto:info@halseymckay.com)



Matthew Kirk, *Studio view*, 2023, Queens, New York

Halsey McKay presents *White Snake*, Matthew Kirk's second solo exhibition with the gallery. Known for his inventive use of commercial building materials, Kirk's latest work is a series of large sculptural paintings inspired by the physical components of his studio. Kirk has consistently selected construction goods for his practice, as in his drywall paintings and tar paper weavings. In making *White Snake*, 4 x 8 sheets of plywood were pulled from the floor, walls, and drawing tables of his workspace and repurposed as surfaces for his objects. The immersive installation calls to mind the massive Floor works by Dieter Roth and Björn Roth. Kirk's latest work has a strong relationship to Roth's practice in which *material stuff is subservient to the emotional and sensual experience for which it stands. Roth was not an artist who tolerated boundaries. In seeking to pulverize them, he elevated the processes by which things happen, embracing accidents, mutations, and accretions of detail over time.*\*

Where Roth's Floors emphasized the index of accumulation, for Kirk it serves as a launching pad. Looking to expand beyond the standard rectilinear shape of painting, Kirk found suggestions in the residual marks on his home-made drawing tables, and notes on the walls. He began cutting them up with saws and putting things back together again as he made sense of how the marks fit into each other as new shapes. These intuitively cobbled forms began to suggest objects and characters from the natural world like animal hides, birds and human figures. While not specifically representational, they are suggestive of personalities and the room feels filled by a sprightly cast. These wooden surfaces are covered with Kirk's signature mark-making and glyphic imagery reflecting his relationship to his own Navajo heritage and identity. His work often explores the space between hegemonic American visual image of the Native and his lived experience, exploiting the hackneyed to both embrace and question imposed cultural tropes.

Matthew Kirk (b. 1978, Ganado, AZ) lives and works in New York. He has had solo exhibitions at FIERMAN, NY; Halsey McKay Gallery, East Hampton, NY; Adams and Ollman, Portland, OR; Makasiini Contemporary, Turku, Finland; Louis B. James, NY, among others. He is a 2019 recipient of the Eiteljorg Contemporary Art Fellowship. His work is in the collections of the Everson Museum, Syracuse, NY; the Eiteljorg Museum, Indianapolis, IN; the Forge Collection, Taghkanic, NY, among others.

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\*From Press Release for Dieter Roth Björn Roth, 23 Jan – 13 Apr 2013, Hauser & Wirth