

# HALSEY MCKAY GALLERY

STEVEN COX - *THE ROAD NOT TAKEN*

April 13 - May 19 | 79 Newtown Lane, East Hampton, NY

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



Halsey McKay Gallery is pleased to present *The Road Not Taken*, Steven Cox's third solo show with the gallery. Though inspired by very real surfaces, textures, and colors, Steven Cox's abstract paintings primarily embody the importance of an artist's choices in real time. His latest exhibition takes its title from Robert Frost's most famous poem, *The Road Not Taken*—our first hint at how significant these decisions are to Cox's process. It also alludes to the circuitous nature of painting itself, referencing how many artists circle back to earlier ideas that, under new circumstances, never feel quite the same.

Cox's unique painting method, where he transfers consecutive layers of thick oil paint onto his canvases via plastic sheets, is not unlike Frost's journey: shaped by a first step (or, in his case, a first paint layer) that defines every subsequent step. Similarly to Gerhard Richter's 'squeegee' paintings, Cox uses one repeated physical action to create surprisingly mechanical-looking effects. The artist invented this process to mimic his original inspiration for these paintings: the outdoor poster boards seen across Europe. Repeatedly overlaid with bright, colorful posters over months and years, these public objects gain their elaborate surfaces through a history of random juxtapositions, rips, and wear.

Within his abstract paintings, Cox gives these walls' journeys a metaphorical significance while also invoking the feel of their specific time and place. As such, his work fits into a contemporary vein of abstract art-making exemplified by painters like Sterling Ruby, whose spray paintings summon recollections of the polluted yet divinely hued views of Los Angeles.

In this way, Cox imbues his acute perception of color into a contemplative and meditative process that allows viewers to traverse a lively and vibrant journey alongside him. His disciples will get handsomely rewarded - not simply by his intricate layering of surprising visual ornament but also through the exuberant vitality of artistic liberty that Cox revels in.

Steven Cox is a Scottish artist who lives and works in Edinburgh. Born in 1986 in Aberdeen, he received his BA from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and his MA from Edinburgh College of Art. He has had multiple international solo exhibitions, group exhibitions as well as residencies. Cox has been featured, reviewed and profiled in Modern Painters Magazine, ArtNews, ArtInfo, WallStreet International, and Dust Magazine, among others.