

**GALERIE TIMONIER**



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Luke Rogers  
Water & Power  
September 7th - October 18th 2024

Galerie Timonier is pleased to present *Water & Power*, Luke Rogers' first solo exhibition in New York City.

Robert Smithson's "A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic, New Jersey," originally published in 1967 as "The Monuments of Passaic" draws to a close as the artist encounters a sandbox:

*"The last monument was a sandbox or a model desert. Under the dead light of the Passaic afternoon the desert became a map of infinite disintegration and forgetfulness. This monument of minute particles blazed under a bleakly glowing sun, and suggested the sullen dissolution of entire continents, the drying up of oceans—no longer where there were green forests and high mountains—all that existed were millions of grains of sand, a vast deposit of bones and stones pulverized into dust. Every grain of sand was a dead metaphor that equaled timelessness, and to decipher such metaphors would take one through the false mirror of eternity."*

Luke Rogers takes municipal utilities as his unmonumental monuments of choice in *Water & Power*. Like Smithson and his desert of a sandbox, Rogers uses factual if not banal objects to manifest a dual sense of curiosity and unease about the built environment. Smithson's Passaic, New Jersey is part illustrated drive, part reflective walk through a glaringly dull locale where "the sun became a monstrous light-bulb" and "the river an overexposed picture." While Los Angeles, the setting of Rogers' work, might seem far away, the two locales are both overwhelmingly suburban, human-made landscapes.

In this group of works, and the artist's practice at large, Rogers uses painting as a tool to dismantle and contemplate complex infrastructure. Beginning with walks, drawings, and photographs, paintings emerge from kernels of observation. As Rogers refines and pairs down what he notices, often shifting the focus or the scale of an image, both understanding and affect manifest. The thin yet oppressive light and the hot, dry heat of his paintings underscore the precarity of the thing that's being looked at.

As subjects, aqueducts and refrigeration are technologies that made once uninhabitable environments habitable. In the painting *Cascades*, Rogers' points us toward William Mullholand's Los Angeles of the early 1900s. The supply of water in Southern California was the factor limiting the city's growth. Completed in 1913, the Cascades is the point where the aqueduct symbolically enters the city, which delivers four hundred and thirty million gallons of water a day to present-day Los Angeles. The filmic, black and white quality of the painting historicizes this improbable, unsustainable system.

*Heat Benders III-IX* move from dull, darkened reds to ember oranges, warm yellows, and scalding whites that go blue. The brightest whites cast the steel almost fluid, as if nearing a total state change. The implied pressure and force of the complex mechanics surrounding the pipes foreshadow an altering of form. The paint is tender in its application, rubbed and scumbled, emitting dryness in its materiality. These surfaces build into a visual heat made almost palpable. How, where, and when these pipes might be deployed is hinted at in Rogers' paintings of the Los Angeles aqueduct system.

In the three largest paintings, scale is inverted—the compact interior space of a refrigerator looms much larger than the massive steel pipeline of the aqueduct. The artificial light of the paintings emanates from the rear of the images— humming, glowing, rippling across corrugated shelves, bending around shiny knobs and opaque obtrusions. A six pack of beer, eggs, and a carton of blueberries become protagonists in a plotless narrative.

In both *Water & Power* and the artist's broader project, meaning accumulates across constellations of images. Together the paintings accumulate parts of things. The gaps and spaces that emerge between these parts speak to a last, latent scale shift – one far beyond the individual. The cumulative scale of the paintings is that of systems, which have the power to transform mundane objects into feats of engineering. In Rogers' close read of the parts, the unconscious conditioning which enables a person to never need to wonder how or why a refrigerator works, begins to come undone. The paintings point back to the complexity and absurdity of the industrial processes from which the objects pictured are derived. The built environment is in equal measure miraculous, inane, confounding, and uncertain in a changing climate. Systems designed to be permanent and impervious feel porous in Rogers' work; a subtle yet persistent sense of anxiety settles just beneath the surface.

Text by Jody Joyner

**Luke Rogers** (b. 1989) lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. He received an MFA from Yale University School of Art and a BFA from Boston University College of Fine Art. His work has been supported by the Al Held Foundation's fellowship at the American Academy in Rome (2014) and the Fondation des États-Unis' Harriet Hale Woolley fellowship in Paris, FR (2015-2016). Recent solo exhibitions include: *as-is* (Los Angeles, CA,) *The Bunker* (Malibu, CA,) and the Fondation des États-Unis (Paris, FR); recent group exhibitions include *as-is* (Los Angeles, CA), *Bozo Mag* (Los Angeles, CA), and *Harkawik* (New York, NY).



Luke Rogers



Organic Valley  
oil on canvas  
75 x 27 in. | 190.5 x 68.6 cm. | 2024



High Life  
oil on canvas  
75 x 27 in. | 190.5 x 68.6 cm. | 2024



Mayo  
oil on canvas  
75 x 27 in. | 190.5 x 68.6 cm. | 2024







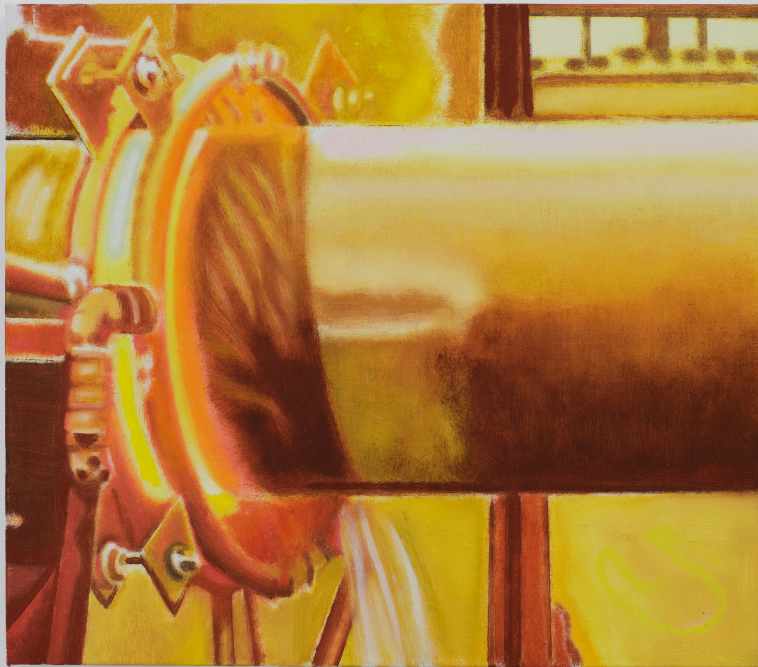
Cascades  
oil on canvas  
35.1/4 x 27 in. | 89.5 x 68.6 cm. | 2024





Siphon  
oil on canvas  
8 x 36 in. | 20.3 x 91.44 cm. | 2024





Heat Bender 8  
oil on canvas  
14 x 16 in. | 35.6 x 40.6 cm. | 2024



Heat Bender 4  
oil on canvas  
12 x 16 in. | 30.5 x 40.6 cm. | 2024

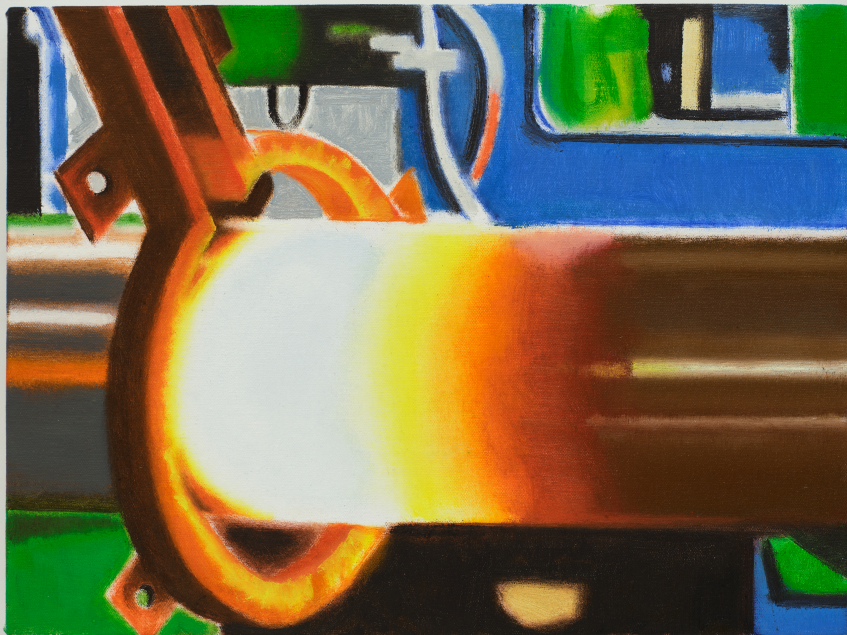


Heat Bender 5  
oil on canvas  
16 x 12 in. | 40.6 x 30.5 cm. | 2024





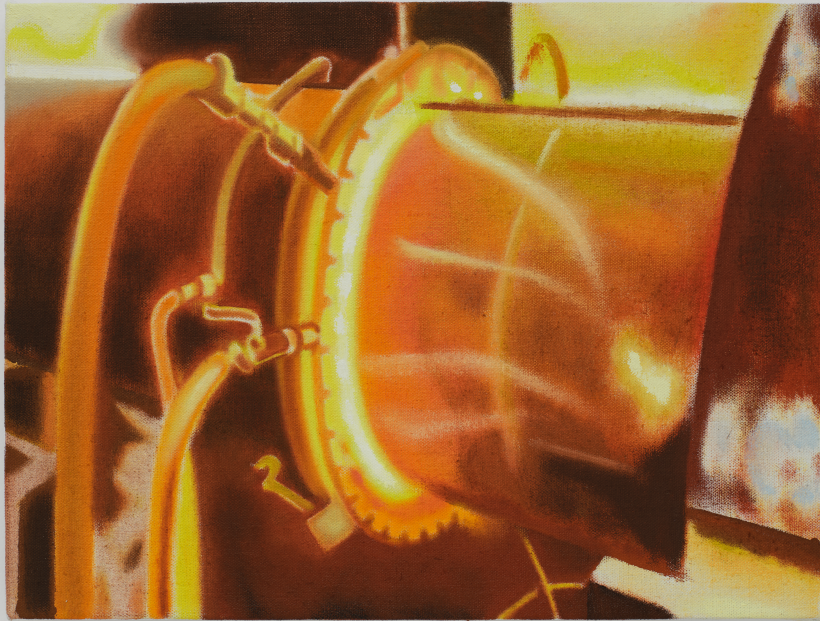
Heat Bender 3  
oil on canvas  
12 x 16 in. | 30.5 x 40.6 cm. | 2024



Heat Bender 6  
oil on canvas  
12 x 16 in. | 30.5 x 40.6 cm. | 2024



Heat Bender 9  
oil on canvas  
12 x 16 in. | 30.5 x 40.6 cm. | 2024



Heat Bender 7  
oil on canvas  
12 x 16 in. | 30.5 x 40.6 cm. | 2024