

Denzil Hurley & Brian Sharp

Organized by Jonas Wood

April 11th - May 24th, 2025

Sebastian Gladstone is pleased to present *Denzil Hurley & Brian Sharp*, an exhibition that brings together the work of the late Denzil Hurley (1949–2021) and contemporary painter Brian Sharp, organized by Jonas Wood. This exhibition is a reflection on mentorship, influence, and the lasting conversations that take place in the studio. It is a gesture of gratitude and remembrance, a recognition of the ways artists carry forward the teachings of those who shaped them.

Denzil Hurley, a painter of quiet rigor, made work that invited deep looking—paintings that held space rather than demanded attention. A native of Barbados, he studied at Yale in the late 1970s before settling into a long career as a professor at the University of Washington. His paintings, often monochromatic and meditative, explore structure and depth, with surfaces that shift subtly within a swath of deep blacks, yellows and blues. The pictures are reminiscent of Ad Reinhardt's expansive surfaces, and Jack Whitten's material ingenuity. His students, including Brian Sharp and Jonas Wood, found in him a teacher who valued dedication over quick results, and whose critical impulse followed them in and out of the classroom.

Hurley's work carries a quiet gravity, his surfaces layered and deliberate. Sharp, embraces suggestion and layering in his paintings, often drawing from the visual language of everyday life. His compositions pull from moments of observation— patterned household textiles, shifting shadows, the textured surface of the city. An open ended, pictorial presentation offering associations as solutions. His work reflects a devotion to painting as both a craft and a way of seeing—values instilled during his time as Hurley's student.

This exhibition is about relationships, it is about the ways in which ideas filter through generations, changing shape but holding onto something essential. For Sharp and Wood, this is a way of honoring a mentor, recognizing that some debts are never meant to be repaid, only acknowledged. Hurley's presence lingers in the choices they make, and the artists they have become. The exhibition is less about looking back and more about seeing what endures.