

Will Yackulic  
*New York Paintings*

In *New York Paintings*, Will Yackulic revisits the mix of visual blur and angular precision that gives his native city its own special gravity.

Part of an ongoing series, these paintings contain urban scenes mostly absent people, with objects just on the point of recognition before returning to paint.

A vase of flowers, captures of traffic, a weathered phone booth — each a relatable image but often with a ghostly absence. An empty cardboard box with pictorial writing looks ancient with light-washed browns and oranges, the composition a meeting of shapes.

A sparrow is strangely pensive, its front feathers blending eerily into the cement surface it rests upon, as if their matter was merging. Distant buildings across a river settle into the haze of a city evening unified in smog. A bright yellow cab is a creature unto itself, awkwardly turning into the edge of the panel and losing its physicality, as if it must de-corporealize to escape the painter.

The tone of the paintings offers a quiet wonder that expands outward. The sense of worn inhabitation is a quality that both attracts and repels one from cityscapes, and is a heart to the stories in them. It begs a questioning of the place where comfort of symbol recognition is undermined by decay of use, yet also carries a comfort from that very use.

In one painting, bricks are almost pills constructed with a maddening enough angularity that we house a concept of ourselves in them, yet still require a larger than life sign outside some poor soul's window, acknowledging "DRUGS".

Looking at a rooftop from below, the distance between sky and roof is up, only to be seen looking straight ahead. The upper lip of another structure appears at the very bottom of the same panel, as if one could pull it right out of the painting between the fingers, with the whole structure toppling over.

Yackulic's reticence in detailing human figures is telling in that his connection is to the cityscape itself. Instead of portraits, a dark curve here, a light wisp there, but the blurriest of images that can easily be confused with surrounding marks and minute splotches of colors .. the same marks that placed elsewhere make one think of vegetables, or traffic paint.

Perhaps what's most ghostly about a densely populated city like New York, is that each subsequent revisit reveals much of it has changed, moved on, is gone. Like a memory, every time one goes back it resembles less and less the thing remembered. These

paintings are the rooms of memory then, a capture of the wonder at a favorite landscape that changes and wears both internally and externally.

Will Yackulic was born in 1975 in New York City and now lives and works in Berkeley, CA. He received a BFA from SUNY Purchase, studied at Lacoste Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Lacoste, France and Hogeschool voor de Kunsten in Amsterdam. Recent exhibitions include Et al, San Francisco, Berkeley Art Museum, Berkeley; Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento. Yackulic's art has been reviewed in publications such as Artforum, Modern Painters, Flash Art, and the Los Angeles Times.