

SOREN HOPE: *TWO TIME*

September 12 – November 1, 2025

Opening Reception: September 12, 2025, 6-8 pm

New York Life Gallery is pleased to present *Two Time*, a solo exhibition of new works by Soren Hope. Ruses pervade the seven paintings and five aquatints with monotype on view. Each ruse rests on one thing standing in for another – one figure's arms lent to another, a thumb standing in as a filched nose, one half of a face serving as the whole through a mirrored completion. In these proxy arrangements, the substitute is a clumsy approximation; it spills. Close enough – or too close, as a necessary claustrophobia undergirds the overreach of these trades. These bodily arrangements confuse edge, but in the gesture of playing toward exchangeability, they enact the impossibility of it. A finitude of embodiment.

Primacy of gesture unites the palpable tension between figuration and abstraction in Hope's works. Each brushstroke asks us to suspend our disbelief – to believe the accumulated marks on a canvas coalesce into discrete if partial subjects, as a child pretends their thumb between their index and middle finger into a nose. And yet, the works' surfaces, wrought with pooling oil paint and conspicuous brush work, make such blind faith impossible. As in the confused edge of the bodily illusion, the paint performs a vertiginous coming undone – the flickering contingency of the body making sense.

As in the paintings, this tension plays out in Hope's suite of aquatints with monotype, *Mouth, moving lips as if speaking*, an edition variée depicting a face mirrored down the middle, in a recursive retelling that flirts with a coherent whole but not quite – like a word whose sound severs from its meaning on the umpteenth re-speaking. Spit-bite aquatint, softground, and drypoint make up a static repeated form, while unruly monotype erasure and puddling marks elaborate and mis-translate the variable image of mirrored parts across the series.

Two, the pair, interlocking and bumping up against each other. Two times – how about a third, again and again, let's repeat. *Two Time* – a splitting, a contradiction. Simultaneous truths and irreconcilable differences. Rules bent and vessels leaking. The paintings and prints keep secrets and tell on themselves.

Soren Hope (b. 1993 Long Island, NY) is a painter based in New Haven, CT. Hope received a BA in Studio Art from Carleton College in 2015 and an MFA in Painting from Yale University in 2023. Their first solo exhibition was at Duck Creek, Springs, NY (2018), and group exhibitions include Perrotin, New York, NY (2024, 2023); Eric Firestone Gallery at Expo Chicago, IL (2024); Tripoli Gallery, Wainscott, NY (2024); Yve Yang, New York, NY (2023); and Spurs, Beijing, China (2023). Hope has attended residencies at Vermont Studio Center, Low Season Artist Project, and 100W Corsicana, and has received the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation grant, as well as teaching fellowships at Carleton College and Yale Prison Education Initiative.