

# Ground Work

February 17 -  
March 17, 2022

Bryce Anderson &  
Clay Mahn

In their two-person show, *Ground Work*, painters Bryce Anderson and Clay Mahn explore the practice of image-making and the objecthood of painting. Anderson's paintings seek to uncover the potential of images and authorship by utilizing found photographs, while Mahn creates paintings that center on materiality and process, excavating and burnishing layers of paint and powdered marble with a focus on subtraction rather than addition.

Inspired by his previous sculptural works made of cast concrete, Mahn translates the roughness and bulk of those three-dimensional forms into two-dimensional symbols that cascade across the canvas in varying states of dissolution. Like well-weathered parquet floors, individual patterns advance and recede into the painting's patina, refusing the satisfaction of pattern recognition. Mahn focuses our attention on the painting's surface, which he manipulates into matte and gloss finishes with chalk and buffed wax, the materials telling their story in a physical and tactile way that defies the illusionistic premise of painting.

Anderson's work depicts foreign yet familiar landscapes that are bisected by a color-blocked margin divides and obfuscates the composition. Acting as a chromatic cipher, these boundaries function as a self-reflexive reminder of the objecthood of both the source material and the painting itself. Anderson teases out elements of abstraction through figuration, and by mining the escapism of found imagery. Without a known source, the universality of these images allows the viewer to position themselves in relation to the landscape with a sense of belonging.

In *Ground Work*, both Anderson and Mahn investigate the idea of a painting's ground as a conceptual tool. Mahn's work is concerned with painting's materiality, surface and ground. His mark making is leveled through the laminated facade of his paintings that unifies a history of addition and subtraction. Anderson's work carefully considers the artifact of photography as a framing device, his compositions focusing on the literal landscape ground to unearth stories that speak to popular culture, art history, and personal narratives. *Ground Work* speaks to the enduring legacy of painting as a framework for ideas, exploration and form.