

Morán Morán is pleased to present Willie Stewart's *In Between Days*, his first solo exhibition with the gallery, which is comprised of eleven paintings and a video projection. All the works shown here visually reflect the artist's understanding of how we regard and arrange time, where we place longing and what reminiscence looks like. Many of his pieces feature a layering or nesting of images that can be considered an homage to the square but also as a reference to how we organize mementos and memories. Overall, his imagery tends to evoke rather than describe an experience. Through his usage of hallucinatory tropes, he invites us to a Symbolists' trance of metaphorical and subliminal transcendence.

Stewart classifies time, as it relates to this body of work, into categories. The first, and possibly the most prevalent, is the obsolescence of technology and specifically that of the 1980s. During the artist's youth, VHS was considered an advancement in recording and he amassed a collection of them, numbering in the hundreds. He references VHS in several ways, sometimes as a three-dimensional, larger-than-life replica, and in other instances as a deflated nod where we only see the contour of a flattened cover.

Another category falls under contemporary examples of time correlation. We measure an activity by the length of an album, identify a certain age with seeing a particular movie for the first time, or associate a poignant moment to a song. Stewart also regards occasions as a categorization of time. Sentimental items, like greeting cards or bouquets, which mark a celebration or event, are only valuable to the recipient. The significance and symbolism of time are highly individual and personal, and gestures are worthless without relationships.

Additionally, Stewart contends with art historical time in his exhibition. We reproduce works of art as a means to understand the history of an image, so his meticulous drawing of a 1980s photograph of a 17th century Dutch painting, as seen in *Everything Counts* (2019), continues that exercise. Expanding on this notion, the artist also deftly recreates wood paneling through a faux finish technique, although, he is using acrylic paint on canvas so that '70s artifice becomes elevated through an artisan technique, finally emerging into a contemporary context. In a similar vein, he incorporates a backdrop of a simplified brick wall in several paintings to indicate post-war geometric abstraction.

As *In Between Days* continues Stewart's investigation of memories, both personal and cultural, through these different perceptions of time, he also offers a nostalgic capsule and embracement of sentimentality, fixing instants between two points – a beginning and an end. "Everything has a place on a timeline. When we look at a printed timeline of events, we see thousands of years on a single page." – Willie Stewart

Willie Stewart, born 1982 in Gallatin, Tennessee, currently lives and works in New Haven, Connecticut. He recently received an MFA in Sculpture from Yale University (2018), and his BFA from The Cooper Union (2016). His work has been included in exhibitions at Soft Opening, London, UK; Seed Space, Nashville, TN; Boston Center for the Arts, Boston, MA; and Herron School of Art and Design, Indianapolis, IN. Stewart completed residencies at Pioneer Works, Brooklyn, NY (2016), and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME (2014).