

SOLOWAY

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Fox Hysen, *East Coaster*

January 19 – February 22, 2020

Opening Sunday, January 19, from 6:00-8:00

Soloway is pleased to present *East Coaster*, an exhibition by Fox Hysen.

Painting is like touching or picking up an object. It is touching an object. Painting is about feeling but also about slapstick: doing too much or too little and not fixing it. Things can happen at the same time: a cat can appear in the middle of an abstract painting or a poker chip can suck all of the illusion out of a convincing space. Color is saturated: searing reds, and chalky periwinkle and glowing pumpkin gold, and nasty, acid greens or plain Kelly green. Oil paint is scraped, plastered on, stirred up with the brush, painted over, or left as it was. Space is clumped and claustrophobic, or deserted. References come and go with ease: maybe this is the most graceful thing Fox Hysen does?

Hysen sticks round things onto square paintings. Hysen says: "I've started putting specific objects in my paintings like door handles, table coasters, poker chips. I'm interested in the symbolism but also my body's relationship to these objects -- round things my hand wants to reach out and grasp. But the objects are stuck in the painting so they defy you. I'm interested in this push-pull, which is very literal compared to what you can do with color or collage."

During a studio visit Hysen recalls a realist painting by Kasmir Malevich of a woman pushing a baby carriage. The work outside the oeuvre, transitional work -- maybe even the reject pile -- opens doors. Hysen courts the margins of her own repertoire, following impulses, testing notions and does not worry about consistency. Themes recur but each painting follows its own course. "Touch" and material investment are always present: the viscous and tactile, and the reach for things, for poker chips, door handles, and coasters. Many of these objects float in box like rooms which seem to be made of glass.

In Hysen's studio there are many drawings which range from crisp fragments to fully realized ideas. They are dense with materiality: watercolor, egg tempera, printing processes and more poker chips. Some of these are immediate with a few brushstrokes, fewer colors and more open paper, others layer drawing and watercolor over print for a richer, fuller effect.

Big ideas are grounded in everyday objects. It's work that is full of ideas but doesn't depend on them. Both reckless and contemplative Hysen's work unapologetically carves a fresh space for painterly painting.

Hysen was born in San Rafael, CA and has a B.A. from NYU 2006, and an MFA from Yale School of Art 2015. Hysen spent five years in Berlin, Germany, the years 2003/04 and from 2009-2013. This is Hysen's first show in New York since a solo at Marcello Marvelli Gallery in 2006. Hysen was the Spring 2019 Artist-in-Residence at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and is currently visiting faculty in the painting department at VCU. She lives and works in Norfolk, Connecticut.