

## Stephen Friedman Gallery

### Wayne Gonzales

15 March – 13 April 2019

PV Thursday 14 March  
6-8 pm



Wayne Gonzales' fifth solo exhibition at Stephen Friedman Gallery will comprise paintings that continue the artist's interrogation of history. Produced between 2015 and 2019, all of the works in the exhibition share an inherent 'American-ness' in terms of subject matter and sensibility. Working from his own photography, and also images by iconic modernists Walker Evans and Charles Sheeler, Gonzales' meticulously crosshatched paintings critically examine the contemporary American landscape.

The exhibition comprises two bodies of work, each sharing a similar perspective in their depiction of urban and pastoral life. The first, produced between 2015 and 2017, focuses on the effects of industrialisation in New York and Pennsylvania. The second, made between 2017 and 2019, looks at the artist's birthplace of Louisiana. Both will be interspersed with Gonzales' own source imagery, as well as key examples of photography by Walker Evans and Charles Sheeler to contextualise the artist's documentation of American history.

Discussing his recent paintings, Emily Wilkerson, Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs for Prospect New Orleans, explains: 'Between watching the view from his Lower East Side apartment transform with the city's ever-burgeoning development, and tracking the ebb and flow of devastation and rejuvenation in his Southern birthplace, Gonzales has become interested in accentuating the psychological space between landmarks over time.'

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## Gallery Hours

Tuesday to Friday, 10am-6pm  
and Saturday, 11am-5pm

## Social Media

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Skyscrapers, factories and products of consumerism populate Gonzales' images of New York and Pennsylvania. Paintings such as 'View Up Tenth Avenue' (2017) are based on a series of photographs that Gonzales took out of the window of his studio in Manhattan, recording the ever-changing New York skyline in scrupulous, monochromatic detail. In contrast to this sign of prosperity, 'Tank' (2016-2017) depicts a closely cropped viewpoint from a defunct and weathered factory in Pennsylvania that once produced most of the steel that was required to build New York's skyscrapers. A similar plant is readily visible in the background of Evans' photograph 'Birmingham Steel Mill and Workers' Houses' (1936) on view in the exhibition, likely taken on the artist's fixed-term photographic campaign for the Resettlement Administration (RA). Presenting these works alongside one another emphasises how Gonzales points to the historical and economic disparity that is manifested by different architectural relics.

Gonzales' new series of works, based on his own photographs of the Mississippi Delta in Louisiana, recall archetypal depictions of American landscapes. Significantly, these are the first of Gonzales' crosshatched paintings to be rendered in vivid technicolour and were initially developed for the artist's participation in Prospect New Orleans in 2017. Seen in the context of Evans' own documentation of economic and social hardship in the South during the Depression, Gonzales alludes to the resonances between the 1930s and present-day America. Here, the artist unpicks the seemingly sedate nature of Bayou life.

Using a technique centred on the effects of chiaroscuro, the artist creates form through differing densities of interlocking, crosshatched lines. Dependent on our proximity to the work, Gonzales' scenes come in and out of focus like looking through the lens of an analogue camera. From afar, we are granted a strong sense of the scene as a whole; when up close, the landscapes dissolve into hazy, frenetic brushstrokes. The artist's approach to composition is much like a photographer, cropping, editing and manipulating his own source imagery using digital technology before configuring his paintings.

Wayne Gonzales was born in 1957 in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA. He now lives and works in New York, USA. The artist's work was most recently featured in the acclaimed group exhibition 'Everything Is Connected: Art and Conspiracy' at The Met Breuer, New York earlier this year. Other major exhibitions include 'Chaos and Awe: Painting for the 21st Century', Chrysler Museum