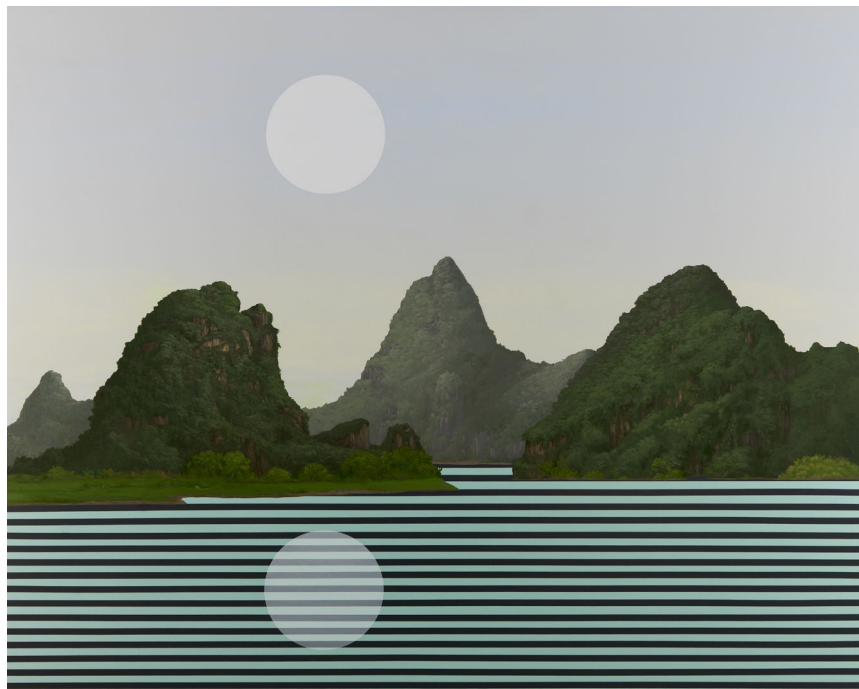


Dean Monogenis

Liminal Tide

13.01.23 → 04.03.23

Press release



Dean Monogenis, *Mitera*, 2021,
acrylic on wood panel,
122 x 152 cm

Xippas Geneva

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Tuesday to Friday:
10am to 1pm and 2pm to 6.30pm
Saturday: 12pm to 5pm

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Opening January 12, 6 to 9pm on the occasion of La Nuit des Bains.

Xippas Gallery in Geneva is pleased to present *Liminal Tide*, a solo exhibition by Dean Monogenis. The Greek-born American artist's paintings depict dreamlike spaces in which architectural and natural elements intertwine. He depicts modernist buildings, colourful scaffolding, and imaginary architects' houses amidst rocky landscapes overgrown with wild vegetation. Balancing on the border between reality and fantasy, his works seem to embody a state of permanent transition, a continuous dialogue between urbanisation and nature, forging a utopian vision with a dystopian touch.

In general, Dean Monogenis paints on wood or aluminum panels with the use of stencils and tape and combines abstract elements with painterly components depicted in all the fascinating details. The lines, edges and textures are very important to him. His gesture is premeditated and precise without compromising spontaneity.

"At the beginning of the Pandemic, in the early ensuing chaos of lockdowns and travel restrictions I wanted to distill my imagery down to its basic elements of land, water, and architecture. Physically restricted to travel in person my desire was to create something like a set of fantasy post cards that were descriptive of places I traveled in my mind. The linking element between all these images, the supporting rhythm or beat became the stripe. A motif I have used in many variations and to symbolize many different things would this time consistently represent the water.

And in doing so would link each image to the next across a consistent pattern. One that is both logical and symbolic at the same time.

In this exhibition I felt a bit torn about continuing my theme as I had to acknowledge that, in many ways, the world had moved on from that initial chaos and imprisonment felt at the beginning of the pandemic. That said, for me the pandemic was and still is a factor. There remains a resounding trend toward virtuality and to some extent, fantasy in lieu of physical movement. What struck me as a natural, creative progression, one that allowed me to move forward while retaining some of the key elements I had established at the onset of this body of work, was to explore scale. In making the work larger, what saliently came into focus was the interrelationship between the stripe and the landscape. I have always been fascinated by the interstice of the painterly surface and the graphic, what I considered the edge. But here in this group of work, that edge, where water meets land gains new significance. As a liminal space, it is more pronounced and suggestive. The relationship moves beyond a clarification of negative and positive shapes and into the theoretical realm, filled with memory and the human history of the shoreline. A place where boats moor, and people transition from sea to land. A type of sacred space where the mark of human kind has been felt.

With the use of water as a theme, it's natural to consider its movement and the effect it has on us and our surroundings. Rising sea levels and hurricanes are now a common consideration due to global warming. And while there are global implications there are also local realities. Simple relationships that can be easily ignored. In this context, tides have been of increasing interest to me. Particularly as I have considered my own physical location where I work and when I travel. Here in Brooklyn, my studio is not far from the east river, an estuary which sees the river change direction with the tide as its fresh water mixes with the salt of the sea. Even closer to me is the Newtown Creek, an inlet that once served as a channel for connecting factories to their nautical trade routes. When big storms occur these bodies of water swell and flood the surrounding areas, rewriting that relationship between land and water. Recently on a trip to Galicia in northern Spain I became enthralled in the dramatic transition of the tides changing. In low tide the water pulled so far out that it revealed whole ecosystems that thrived by living on the rocks, the very edge of that shared liminal space between land and sea. All around us, these bodies of water carve their impression on the land sometimes flooding and further reminding the land of their dominance. But in this epochal exchange, the land too has made an impression on the water. Where they meet is a point of tension and mutability, a place I like to direct my focus to, the Liminal Tide." – Dean Monogenis

Born in 1973 in New York, USA, Dean Monogenis lives and works in Brooklyn, USA.

His oeuvre was part of numerous institutional shows: McNay Art Museum (Saint Antonio), Pavillon de l'Arsenal (Paris), Musée d'art moderne de Saint-Etienne Métropole (Saint-Etienne), Schneider Museum of Art (Ashland), Santa Monica Museum of Art, Bronx Museum of Art (New York), Mykonos Biennale (Mykonos), Angels Gate Cultural Centre (San Pedro), Pace University (New York), Federal Reserve Board (Washington), Hunterdon Art Museum (Clinton, New Jersey), Neuberger Museum (NY), Herter Gallery, (University of Massachusetts, Amherst), Makor-Steinhardt Center (New York), Macedonian Cultural Society (New York), Brooklyn Museum of Art (Brooklyn, New York).

In 2013, Dean Monogenis has received «Artist in the Market Place (AIM)» award, attributed by Bronx Museum of the Arts (Bronx, NY, USA) and in 2014 he was invited to conceive outdoor sculptures for the museum. In 2013 and 2016 he was granted residency in CCA Andratx, Mallorca, Spain.