

PRESS RELEASE

MATHIEU LÉVESQUE
HORIZONS - THIS IS THE PLACE

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With his new series Horizons - This is the Place, a mature Mathieu Lévesque articulates more clearly than ever before the social and political questions that underlie his rigorous formal research. He comes back to the surface after extensive exploration of the shaped canvas in recent years with his series of Parallèles. The pleasure of painting is strongly felt in this series, where the accumulation of thin layers of color produces rich textures, echoing many generations of footprints and revealing hard work. We recognize irregular canvases as the paintings remain polygonal even if closer to traditional format. Vibrant diptychs infuse a subtle rhythm that sets the dynamic tone of the exhibition.

Levesque's social and political discourse has always been present in his practice, but never as much as in this latest series. We feel it all the more strongly in the choice of titles. The paintings becomes the incarnation of a territory witness of history, so many times conquered, then lost or stolen. It is the issues of class struggle, identity and cultural diversity that preoccupy Mathieu Lévesque who is returning from a long stay in the heart of the United-States.

The titles evoke it strongly: the large brown and golden diptych entitled Dark Fence thus refers to racial inequalities, segregation and the idea of a border wall separating Mexico from the United States, while Gold Diggers juxtaposes rich shades of yellow and purple and alludes to the colors of California and the Gold Rush. During the Western Conquest, the construction of the Pacific Railroad was done exploiting a large number of Chinese, Native American and Mexican workers. Recalling the colors of the Colorado Basin landscape, the green and orange Long Walk pays tribute to the Navajo expelled from their lands in New Mexico and their migration to Arizona. "It's enough, this is the right place, Drive on," said Brigham Young, a Mormon pioneer, reaching the Great Salt Lake after a devastating migratory flight from the Midwestern plains.

Fascinated since his childhood by American culture, Mathieu Lévesque has long felt a marked interest in the road trip. After having converted his own camper-van, he then engulfed 18,000 km of road in 51 days, (23 states and 2 provinces). Discovering the immensity of American landscapes while living in a tiny cabin, led him to reflect on the origins of this nomadic pleasure. Fashion of life fundamental to the colonization of the American West, the caravanning was first a hard necessity before becoming pleasure tourism.

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