



For Immediate Release:
RYAN CROTTY | EYES CLOSED TO THE SUN

January 14 - February 21, 2021

High Noon is pleased to present **Ryan Crotty's** third exhibition with the gallery, ***Eyes Closed to the Sun***. Crotty's paintings are composed of transparent layers of acrylic sheathed one atop another over a base of modeling compound on linen. He then pulls the pigment, mixed with a gloss gel medium across the surface with an acrylic blade. This method most ostensibly lends itself to palpably sleek but imperfect colorfields of scrumptious, luminous gradients, endlessly fresh, like each time you look at the ocean. This gesture, however, is the only common denominator amongst the wide range of formalistic imagery in his ever-expanding oeuvre.

Crotty's vocabulary slyly engages the structural components beneath the linen to create boundaries and shifts that address the painting as an object, a concept he has leaned into as his technique has evolved. Within the imagery he continuously reminds us that yes, we are looking at a thing— a thing with a history. He also creates his own "reliefs," producing a litany of textures derived mostly from economical materials which are placed beneath the linen and work against the pull of color, akin to printmaking.

The past year of isolation has impacted everyone's creative process differently, but Crotty is accustomed to engaging with the zeitgeist from a distance. He lives and works in rural Nebraska with his family, where over the past decade since receiving his MFA, he has remained remarkably prolific, absent the tribal arts community right outside the door that artists in lower Manhattan enjoy. His studio is a section of an 11,000 square foot former department store built at the turn of the century that his father purchased in '77, the year he was born. Over the years it had been a car dealership and chicken hatchery amongst other things before Crotty took full ownership. Aside from the old weight-training room he converted into his studio, only a gymnastics company occupies another part of the building, though they've not been in operation during the pandemic. Even Crotty's work table was created from century-old display cases, disassembled in the basement and reassembled in the weight room. Concept and process are indistinguishable in his practice and his "bloom where you're planted" type philosophy is evidenced holistically in his paintings and in his life.

The works in ***Eyes Closed to the Sun*** are both an intuitive response to applications and techniques Crotty has resolved over the years as much as they are a meditation on the process of an idea. Quite literally he cannot see the way the newly applied layer will affect the layers beneath it until the medium dries, since it is opaque when wet and becomes translucent, constantly keeping at odds what is conceived and what is created. Regardless, the new body of work yields a surprising number of works unique unto themselves within various proximity to previously excavated methods.

Hayu Marca's Door diverges from the center with an otherworldly pink, transversed by spectral waves that conjure an invented movement we can grasp with perfect clarity. More ominous is ***Ghosts in the Hyperloop***, where a dark, descending central mass is rim-lit by specks of light twisting upward along the sides. Given the year in which the painting was created, it reads as a tongue-in-cheek counter narrative to the naive optimism of the utopian future the Hyperloop represents. In contrast, ***Accept the Inevitable*** is a deceptively simple painting with a fiery belly activated by a green outline that, taken as a whole, shares an aesthetic with *Blade Runner's* prediction of Los Angeles in 2019. ***The New Order of Coexistence*** has a cartoonish *Jem and the Holograms* style new wave drama. At only 14" x 11" it is a gem, and the taught points which separate into bursts of refracted color evoke a tromp l'oeil, making it feel appropriately plastic-wrapped. The paintings' evocative titles encourage multiple reads— a nod to the transcendence of formalism explored in the Light and Space movement— while the veil between structure and image speaks to Crotty's competency in recognizing the necessity of interaction to push the work beyond visual phenomena.

Ryan Crotty earned his BFA in painting from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and his MFA in painting from Syracuse University. Crotty has shown nationally and internationally including exhibitions in New York, Washington D.C., Chicago, Berlin, Montreal, and throughout his home state of Nebraska. His work has been reviewed in publications such as *Hyperallergic*, *The Washington Post*, *Design Milk*, and others. Central to his practice is time and experimentation in his studio in Auburn, NE where he resides with his family.