

VAN DOREN
WAXTER

Evan Nesbit

Marbled and Bewildered

January 5 – February 11, 2023



Revolving Disk of Awakening, 2022, acrylic, dye and ink on burlap, 68 x 79 in (172.7 x 200.7 cm)

Van Doren Waxter is delighted to open an exhibition of paintings by Nevada City-based artist Evan Nesbit, on view from January 5 – February 11, 2023 at 23 East 73rd Street.

In Nesbit's *Porosity* series, the artist poses a fundamental question: How does one make a painting? These paintings are created through an innovative process in which Nesbit squeegees hand mixed acrylic paint through the verso of dyed burlap. India ink is used to draw on the burlap to introduce abstract shapes and now, figurative images. The burlap's weave is pulled, cut into irregular pieces, and re-sewn into dynamic grids. The grid, an emblematic modernist motif usually implying rigidity and order, is playfully subverted in Nesbit's sloping checkerboard patterning. As he pushes the paint through the pores of the fabric, textural protuberances seep out of the burlap weave in a restructuring of the act of painting.

The new works included in the artist's third solo exhibition with the gallery show the development of a pictorial method that builds upon the purely abstract forms in previous bodies of work. Grid and checkerboard patterns have taken new shape in pictographic marks that Nesbit has slowly introduced in his work over the last two years. *Luncheon with Helen* (2022) marks the first completed painting by Nesbit which incorporates this type of drawing. Depictions of leaves are interspersed between Nesbit's emblematic stitched grids. Other images that appear in this series range from tote bags, celestial objects, and wagon wheels. The addition of figurative elements further allows for the artist to introduce subtle narratives to his once purely abstract images.

Through both titles and pictorial forms, Nesbit develops a broader narrative arc, referencing the vibrant regional history of California. The exhibition's title, *Marbled and Bewildered*, refers to a line from Marcel Proust's novel *In Search of Lost Time, Volume 3* in which a group of hash smokers are described as such. The novel focuses heavily on subjectivity and questions any objective nature of reality. In the title for this exhibition, Nesbit questions the subjectivity of the viewer and the objectivity of the art object. The painting *Blue Electric Guillotine* (2022) references a lyric from American indie rock band Pavement, formed in 1989 in Stockton, California. *Totes* (2022) depicts stacked tote bags composed in Nesbit's trademark asymmetrical grid and associates the tote bags utilized within the local wheat industry. This set of new paintings utilizes narrative potential afforded by figuration to firmly situate Nesbit's work in the physical location where it was created.

Evan Nesbit (b. 1985) lives and works in Nevada City, California. He was educated at Yale University, New Haven, CT (MFA) and The San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA (BFA). In 2012, he received the Ely Harwood Schless Memorial Fund Prize from Yale University. Nesbit has held solo exhibitions at James Harris Gallery, Seattle, WA (2018,2015), Weiss Berlin, Berlin, Germany (2017), Koki Arts, Tokyo, Japan (2016,2014), Annarumma Gallery, Naples, Italy (2016) and Roberts & Tilton, Culver City, CA (2016,2014). His work has been presented in group exhibitions at Praz-Delavallade, Paris, France, Brand New Gallery, Milan, Italy, Sean Kelly, New York, NY, among others.

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