

HEATHER GAUDIO FINEART

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Heather Gaudio Fine Art is pleased to announce *Ian McKeever: The Nature of Painting*, the British artist's first exhibition at the gallery. Opening on October 12th, the show will run through November 16th. The public is invited to attend a reception for the artist on Saturday, October 19th, 4-6pm.



McKeever began his artistic practice in the late 1960s, executing landscape drawing and photographic works influenced by the writings of land artist Robert Smithson, and his own travels to Greenland, Papua New Guinea and Siberia. He began painting over his imagery by the 1980s, shifting his attention to emphasize gestural brushstrokes. Although McKeever had a growing interest in the figural and architectural, he eventually abandoned any sense of representation. Using different techniques to apply translucent layers of paint, McKeever went on to create beautiful lyrical abstractions on canvas. Increasing in scale, his paintings became more about their implicit light and suggestions of visual passageways to a space inside their surface. For McKeever, light is not something to be depicted per se, but rather conveyed through the inherent qualities of the medium, be they oil, acrylic or gouache.

Typically, McKeever's works are made in groups, predetermined by a given size and format. Undertaking several canvases at a time, it can take him two to three years to complete a painting. He has been known to re-work a particular composition several times over, destroying two or three canvases before he is satisfied with a direction and result. The show will feature recent paintings from his *Portrait of a Woman* and *Day Paintings* series, alongside works on paper. The first group alludes to their source of inspiration, early Italianate portraiture and religious subjects, their monumental triptych format a nod to the altarpiece. However, their pictorial elements, formal and spatial structures, and the figurative relationships with architectural surroundings have been replaced with soft, amorphous abstractions. The notion of a human presence has been reduced to an inherent light in the translucent layers of pigment. McKeever contrasts these transparent whites by revealing the nature of color with denser, more opaque fields on the side panels.

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The *Day Paintings* have been an ongoing series since the 1990s, created in various scales and formats. The title does not imply they were made in a day, but rather suggests the concept of time. For McKeever, time is another aspect that sits deep within painting that is often overlooked, particularly in our increasingly fast-paced world. It is central to painting, the day-to-day ritual of returning to something that necessitates attention and needs to be done. Over the years, this series has become an index, representative of the concerns within the broader body of work at a given time. They are “a refrain, a recapitulation, or posing an alternative.” Some of the soft pearlescent surfaces in this series reveal delicate chromatic plays peering from within, while others maintain an elegant austerity in their all-black palette. As with the time it takes to build his work, McKeever’s paintings require pause and a sustained engagement from the viewer.

McKeever has held several teaching positions and is the publisher of many texts and essays on the nature of painting. He has received numerous awards and was elected Royal Academician in 2003. His work has been exhibited widely at institutions of note, including Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte, Reina Sofía in Madrid; National Gallery in Beijing; Shanghai Art Museum; National Museum of Norway and Tate Britain, to name a few. McKeever’s work is included in the permanent collections of the Tate and the British Museum, London; Moderner Kunst, Vienna; Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest; Brooklyn Museum of Art and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; and the Yale Center for British Art, New Haven. He currently lives and works in England.

Heather Gaudio Fine Art specializes in emerging and established artists, offering painting, works on paper, photography and sculpture. The gallery provides a full-range of art advisory services, from forming and maintaining a collection, to securing secondary market material, to assisting with framing and installation. The focus is on each individual client, selecting art that best serves his or her vision, space, and resources. The six exhibitions offered every year are designed to present important talent and provide artwork appealing to a broad range of interests. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday; 10:30am to 5:30pm; and by appointment.

For more information and/or high-res images, please contact Rachael Palacios, rachael@heathergaudiofineart.com.

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Ian McKeever, *Portrait of a Woman*, 2014-2015, oil and acrylic on linen and oil and acrylic on cotton duck; triptych, 63 x 135 inches