

Berggruen Gallery is proud to announce Michael Gregory: Time Present, Time Past, an exhibition of new paintings. This show marks his fifteenth solo exhibition with the gallery. Michael Gregory: Time Present, Time Past will be on view from January 11 through February 9th, 2024. The gallery will host a reception for the artist on Thursday, January 11th from 5:00 to 7:00 pm.

For over two decades, Michael Gregory has been interested in rural landscapes and architecture informed by road trips across the country. This fascination is dually formal and social: the artist is interested in the geometric structures of these rural buildings “punctuating” the soft, natural world, as well as these buildings’ centrality to a national myth constructed by farmers, ranchers, and “builders” in rural America. Gregory’s paintings descend from archaeological impulses rather than commemorative ones—his paintings document shifts in the American wilderness and its relationship with human intervention, rather than forwarding an outright celebration of American culture or history. Formally, the orientation of many of Gregory’s paintings might make them more accurately described as portraits for the buildings and landscapes which they depict, but they can also be understood as fictional “artifacts” exploring the germination and decay of American ways of living alongside nature’s strength and perpetuity.

Though his work is representational, Gregory takes inspiration from artists and movements across art history—he cites Breugel, Rothko, Diebenkorn, Hopper, and the American Precisionists as influences. Gregory also uses the concept of the “sublime” from the Romantic landscape painters of the 19th century. The sublime’s awe-inspiring power recalls the stasis and fluidity of time, exposing the emotional underpinnings of time’s passage. The cultural familiarity with rural structures and landscapes appeals to the viewer’s sense of nostalgia, from the Greek

*nostos*, or return, and *algos*, or pain—homesickness. Despite the fact that each image is created from Gregory's imagination, by playing on these familiar, nostalgic atmospheres, Gregory creates an equilibrium between past, present, and future, blurring temporal delineations to the degree that all points in time coalesce together. This dynamic recalls the opening lines of T.S. Eliot's *Burnt Norton*, from which the exhibition takes its name: "Time present and time past/Are both perhaps present in time future/And time future contained in time past." Gregory's paintings suggest that the past and future are occurring alongside the present, thereby reorienting our relationship to the lands on which we live and the histories we inhabit.

Gregory was born in 1955 in Los Angeles, California. Gregory's work is included in many private and public collections, including the Boise Art Museum, Becton International Corporation, Delaware Art Museum, Evansville Museum of Arts, Honolulu Advertiser Collection, San Jose Museum of Art, and the USEU Mission and Residence. Previously working from Bolinas, California, the artist currently lives and works in Rhinebeck, New York.