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Press Release:

Matt Phillips: Comfort Inn

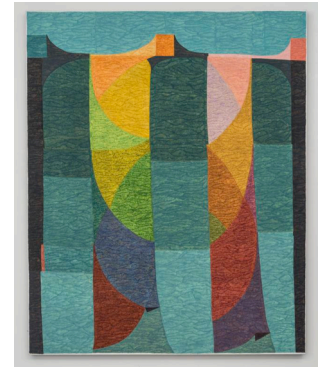
January 6 - February 6, 2016

steven harvey fine art projects

208 Forsyth St. & 237 Eldridge St.

Reception: Wednesday, Jan. 6, 6-8 pm

gallery hrs: 12-6, Wed-Sun and by appointment



Steven Harvey Fine Art Projects is proud to present *Comfort Inn*, a one-person exhibition of recent paintings by Matt Phillips. This is Phillips' second solo exhibition at the gallery. The exhibition will take place at the gallery's two spaces located at 208 Forsyth Street and 237 Eldridge Street.

Matt Phillips' work freely weaves together various aesthetic traditions, including modernist abstraction, folk art, and African textiles. His paintings often begin with an underlying geometric scaffolding but over time, they drift from the measured to articulate particular forms, tune color relationships, and define space. Irregular geometries reveal a searching and imperfect hand, a flawed logic and a personable humor. Phillips inserts the body into the rectangle and the intimate into the grid. There is a tension between geometric rationality and human touch. They celebrate the unexpected.

Phillips' paintings simultaneously evoke and employ the deeply familiar architecture of decorative surfaces, textiles and fabrics, suggestive of a habitable yet transient domesticity. Like the Comfort Inn hotel across the street from his studio, his work conjures, as he puts it, "a space that is initially foreign... even artificial, yet somehow becomes a stage for something deeply human."

The surfaces of these paintings are very important. Mixing his paint from a combination of pigment and silica, each passage of the brush dries and becomes a finite moment. A secondary space is produced through the accumulation of interlocking strokes, generating a low relief illusionism and ushering the element of time into the viewing experience. These paintings glow with an internal luminosity. In the words of poet and curator Geoffrey Young, "Always one senses a presiding aesthetic rigor, as of something (like humor) discovered in the act.... Taken in slowly, their syntax emerges (how they make sense), their poetics stands clear (image perceived all at once), their openness to visual accident seduces."

Phillips has been an assistant professor at Mount Holyoke College and Hampshire College. He is a founding member of TSA (Tiger Strikes Asteroid) gallery in Bushwick. In the fall of 2014, the University of Maine Museum of Art presented a survey show of Phillips' paintings entitled *Staring at the Sun with a Penny in My Pocket*. In 2015, Phillips installed a mosaic commission, realized with Steven Miotto, at PS106 in the Bronx. The project was commissioned by the NYC Dept. of Ed. and the NYC School Construction Authority Public Art for Public Schools Program. Phillips will be in residence at the MacDowell Colony this coming February.

Please contact SHFAP at 917-861-7312 for further information or images.

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