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PRESS RELEASE:

Jason Stopa: The Gate

Rear gallery: Meghan Brady,
Clare Grill, Alison Hall and Jan Müller
August 2nd- August 31st, 2018
Opening reception: Wednesday, August 8th, 6-8pm



Jason Stopa, *Johari Window*, 2018

Steven Harvey Fine Art Projects presents "The Gate," a solo exhibition by Jason Stopa. This is Stopa's **first** solo show with the gallery. His recent body of work uses familiar architectural patterns—fences, gates, stages and windows—as structural environments for paintings. Stopa's paintings employ thin, washy gradients, tightly drawn lines, gestural mark-making, and thick impasto to create a language of dense atmosphere and illusionistic depth. For this exhibition, Stopa has curated the back space of the gallery with works by Claire Grill, Meghan Brady, Alison Hall and Jan Müller that relate to his own work.

Stopa's oil paintings are built up through successive layers of complex color arrangement. The artist applies gradients that suggest a time of day or atmospheric space, and then paints the structural lines that build the armature of the painting. He masks off rectangular areas painted in contrasting colors that act as containers for expressive content in the form of gestural markmaking or untamed wilderness. The **final** mark in each painting is scaled up or down and is derived from the language of the line work—a frame, a window, an archway—all are painted in thick impasto squeezed directly out of a tube.

Many of Stopa's titles bear relationships to theater. The artist states, "I want my paintings to function in a way where marks and imagery are actors acting in space, where a painting can be a stage for events." His staging and framing devices pose complex image / painting problems that play out in a variety of contexts. In "The Gate" the artist has painted a gate pattern that references the boundaries and partitions in the paintings. In these paintings, Stopa acknowledges that all paintings bear a structural function—opening like a window, closing off like a **flat** wall or propping subjects up on a stage—be they abstract or representational. By painting a gate pattern in the gallery, he intends to alter the space aesthetically and conceptually. The gate also acts a metaphor for hanging paintings outside, entertaining a democratic idea about abstractions' possibilities. The gate pattern is intended to be quotidian, yet disorienting with spatial permutations based on rotation.

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Stopa has selected works for the back room of the gallery by artists Alison Hall, Clare Grill, Meghan Brady and Jan Müller, as a counterpoint to his exhibition. Grill and Hall exhibit small paintings that employ their specific, delicate touch, alongside Brady's hand-made, colorful ceramics. Müller's mosaic-like Seated Figures, 1953, bridges figuration and abstraction with its highly abstract paint application. It stems from the period of Muller's first exhibition and was included in his 1962 Guggenheim Museum retrospective.

Stopa (b. 1983) is a painter and critic living in Brooklyn, NY. He received his BFA from Indiana University and his MFA from Pratt Institute. Stopa's previous solo exhibitions include "Double Trouble" at Hionas Gallery (2015), New York and "Brooklyn Zoo" at Novella Gallery, New York (2014). Recent exhibits include "Gnomons" at Non-Objectif Sud, France and "Witches & Dudes," at Galerie KANT, Copenhagen.