

REYNOLDS GALLERY

ELIZABETH GILFLEN

Shorthand

July 12 – August 31, 2018

Opening Reception
Thursday, July 12
5 – 8 pm



Underscore #18, 2018, oil on canvas, 12 x 16 inches

Reynolds Gallery is pleased to announce the opening exhibition *Shorthand* with recent paintings by Beth Gilflen. The exhibition opens with a reception for the artist on Thursday, July 12 from 5 to 8 pm. This will be Gilflen's first solo exhibition at Reynolds Gallery.

Gilflen paints evocative and simultaneously sophisticated, atmospheric oil paintings. Her abstractions embrace spontaneity and gesture, as well as thought and contemplation. Starting with an untouched ground, Gilflen applies washes of pigment that concurrently retreat and advance, often unfurling into brushy, gestural markings. Here, the notation is of primary concern. Fluctuating in vehemence, each mark evidences the artist's hand—purposive, spontaneous, and altogether present. Movement is omnipresent. Gilflen's restrained color palette amplifies this immediacy, inviting the viewer to discover something previously unrealized—a nebulous form, an abstracted landscape, a faintly familiar visage—a refreshing ambiguity that makes Gilflen's work both delightful and challenging.

Based in Brooklyn, New York, Gilflen received her BFA in Drawing and Painting from D.A.A.P. at the University of Cincinnati and her MFA in Painting & Printmaking from VCUarts (1997, 2001). She has been awarded fellowships from Yaddo (2013), Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop (2013), The Marie Walsh Sharpe Foundation Space Program (2010-11), Gallery Aferro (2010), Alijra Emerge (2008), and The Bronx Museum of Art AIM Program (2005). Her work has been featured in solo exhibitions at Fred Giampietro Gallery, New Haven, CT; the

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Hunterdon Art Museum, Clinton, NJ; Gallery Aferro, Newark, NJ; and John Davis Gallery, Hudson, NY. Her work has been included in numerous group exhibitions nationally including the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, the Hunterdon Art Museum, the Islip Art Museum, Lehman College Gallery, Morgan Lehman Gallery, Kathryn Markel Gallery, Reynolds Gallery, the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, and internationally at TW FineArt in Brisbane, Australia.

Artist Statement

My paintings begin with drawing. I use ink-like paint to make notations, rhythmically placing marks on the canvas. The diluted color soaks into the surface as I decide which way the line must turn. I think of the line as a path that records the moment when mind, hand, and body collide. A conversation erupts between the slippery material and what it wants to become. A kinetic energy can take over, yet I strive for a tension in each mark that is sprung almost as tight as the coils and tendons that create it. These works are rooted in the language of gestural abstraction but are intimately personal, stemming from a mapping of thought.

Recently, my work has become more succinct. I continue to embrace the spontaneity of my process, yet I am interested in describing the forms that emerge with more specificity. Not unlike the activity of shorthand writing, I seek a brevity and distillation of linear structure that alludes to a larger idea. Through a more economical use of line and pared-down color, I begin to activate the painting's pace with a sense of vastness and shapes that are just on the verge of legibility. A sparse, elemental stain may evoke a field or a deep atmospheric space, but I am provoked to build on this, carving out uneasy, suspended forms. The simplicity of a lone mark compels me to look and to touch the canvas again and again.

Through this momentum I am able to recognize the unique temporal structures that are unfolding. These exist in an unfixed space as every move transforms the work into something else. Often, I will allow the accumulations of marks to escalate, taking the work on unpredictable routes. One mark leads to the next, building something that is tangible, yet unnameable. It is its own entity, a force that is put into motion with visceral paint.

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Freeze Frame and Palm Purr, 2018, oil on canvas, each 60 x 54 inches

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