

On View

Gallery Hopping: Eddie Martinez Plays Cowboys and Politics at Timothy Taylor

The Brooklyn-based artist responds to the current political climate with a host of dystopian paintings.

Perwana Nazif, April 3, 2017



Timothy Taylor's "Cowboy Town" exhibition—which opened to the public on Thursday—gathers a series of new paintings by Brooklyn-based artist Eddie Martinez.

The artworks, all painted within the past few months, explore the contemporary socio-political climate in the US, while also marking a shift in Martinez's work towards figuration.

The paintings maintain the characteristic red, yellow, and blue hues Martinez is known for, but presented in a more dystopian, menacing manner.

The eponymous painting *Cowboy Town*, for example, presents a face emerging amidst chaos, adding to the feeling of uneasiness.

MITCHELL-INNES & NASH

“The title, ‘Cowboy Town,’ is definitely some sort of reaction to the current political state we are in, but I can’t tell if the title reflects the paintings or if the paintings reflect the title,” said Martinez regarding the new body of work.

Born on a naval base in Connecticut in 1977, Martinez’s arts background is rooted in graffiti, which now translates into rough, energetic movement in his practice. Along with the inspiration provided by the graffiti he practiced in his younger years, Martinez also cites skateboarding, along with other forms of popular urban culture, as a huge influence, particularly with color, as he mentioned in an interview with *ARTnews*.

The paintings on view are made of oil paint, enamel, spray paint, screen printing and studio detritus, creating a thick, tangible texture.

They allude to several references, including music, which is a key element to Martinez’s artistic practice—Rastafari culture in particular.

In Martinez’s oeuvre, the combination of abstract forms with energetic lines in vivid colors creates a sense of movement.

With backgrounds verging on monochrome, more minimal imagery, and a slant towards figuration, Martinez’s newest pieces express the anxiety surrounding the contemporary social and political environment.