

*THE BURDEN OF WAIT:
PAINTINGS FROM THE NEW AMERICAN SOUTH*

8 December 2022 – 28 January 2023



Susan Inglett Gallery is pleased to present *THE BURDEN OF WAIT: PAINTINGS FROM THE NEW AMERICAN SOUTH*, a two-person exhibition of works by Jodi Hays and Michi Meko. The show will run from 8 December 2022 to 28 January 2023. The artists will be present on 8 December 2022 from 6 to 8 PM.

Jodi Hays and Michi Meko come together in *The Burden of Wait* to present a selection of works rooted in their shared focus, the Southern landscape.

Hays employs reclaimed cardboard, dyed fabrics, and other quotidian materials to explore the visual lexicon of the American South. She describes her practice as “a southern povera,” calling upon the use of unconventional and humble materials. Hays' work is further inspired by the material habits of Robert Rauschenberg and the rituals and repetitions of Beverly Buchanan. Through her deliberate use of found material, the artist visualizes the resourceful labor of women in the South as those that make, stack, sew, mend, and fix.

Meko is an Alabama-raised artist, currently living and working in Atlanta. His work is inspired by his experience as a Black man alone in nature. Drawing from his life story, Meko uses romanticized images of the American South as “metaphors for selfhood, resilience, and the sanity required in the turbulent oceans of contemporary America.” Meko depends on the color black as the primary medium in his works. As such, his landscapes impart a metaphysical aura, inviting the psyche to roam and wander. Meko constructs a world of the sublime: awe-inspiring, beautiful, frightening, and powerful. Punctuated by sharp lines and bursts of color, the artist shows how the simple language of abstraction can be used to conjure a universe of possibilities.

The juxtaposition of Hays' colorful assemblages and Meko's expansive paintings offer a nuanced narrative of the American South as a place of endless transformation. Side by side, these artists showcase the scope and material breadth of the Southern imagination.

JODI HAYS (b. 1976) is a Nashville-based artist whose work explores the material vocabulary of the American South through reclaimed and repurposed cardboard, textiles, and fabrics that resemble screen doors, old boards, and sign paintings. She is a 2019 Finalist for the Hopper Prize. Her work has been seen most recently in a solo exhibition at Night Gallery, Los Angeles.

MICHI MEKO (b. 1974) is an Atlanta-based artist who focuses on the African-American experience of navigating public spaces while remaining buoyant within them. Meko was born in Florence, Alabama, and received a BFA in Painting from the University of North Alabama. He is the recipient of the Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant and the Atlanta Artadia Award and was a finalist for the 2019 Hudgens Prize. Meko's work was seen recently in a solo exhibition at Kavi Gupta, Chicago and included in Valerie Cassel Oliver's “The Dirty South: Contemporary Art, Material Culture, and the Sonic Impulse.”

The exhibition will be on view at the gallery located at 522 West 24 Street Tuesday to Saturday 10 AM to 6 PM. The Gallery will be closed for the holiday beginning 2 PM the afternoon of 23 December reopening 3 January 2023. For additional information please contact Susan Inglett Gallery at 212 647 9111 or info@inglettgallery.com. Join the conversation with Susan Inglett Gallery, Jodi Hays, and Michi Meko on Instagram (@SusanInglettGallery and @jodihayspainter, @michimeko), Facebook (Susan Inglett Gallery) and Twitter (@inglettgallery), and via the hashtags #SusanInglettGallery, #JodiHays, and #MichiMeko.