



Travis McEwen
The Arch: Plans for a Heterotopic Space Opera

September 8 - October 14, 2017

dc3 Art Projects is proud to present *The Arch: Plans for a Heterotopic Space Opera*, Travis McEwen's first solo exhibition at the gallery. Working primarily within the medium of painting, McEwen's work investigates themes of otherness, queerness, gender, and identity. In his latest body of work, created over the last two years, McEwen takes inspiration from the science fiction sub-genre of space operas to create an assemblage of marginal characters and liminal landscapes, and expands his explorations into sculptural objects with a collection of wood 'diving rods'.

Historically, McEwen's practice has been a portrait-focused investigation into the emotional, psychological and social experiences of being othered, and more recently has extended into how queer community and alternate spaces are constructed. Using a fierce and codified colour palette, McEwen explores ideas of gender, marginalization, identity, isolation and markers of trauma, giving notional and composite figures a place in portraiture historically denied to them.

In *The Arch: Plans for a Heterotopic Space Opera*, McEwen expands his project to include landscapes alongside portraiture, queering both these traditional genres of paintings with multiple readings of gender, identity, location and time. Within his otherworldly landscapes, spaces are created that suggest futurity, depicting possible dawns or dusks, perpetually liminal. Arches, pyramids, and other superstructures populate these vistas, and yet they evade specificity in order to be suggestive of many possibilities.

Hung salon style, McEwen's paintings come together to create a space for otherness - a heterotopia, as described by Foucault - where the shared experiences of isolation and being othered becomes the basis for collective responses, creative replies, counter-publics and potentially, community. Here, prevailing sci-fi themes of world-building, both literal and figurative, become a site for the possibilities of new identities, modes of social organization, politics and environmental conditions, linking back to McEwen's larger practice.

Travis McEwen was born in Red Deer, AB, Canada and holds a BFA from the University of Alberta, Edmonton and an MFA from Concordia University, Montreal. His work has been shown throughout Canada, including Latitude 53 (Edmonton, AB), Galerie La Centrale Powerhouse (Montreal, QC) and Owens Art Gallery (Sackville, NB), and included in Future Station: 2015 Alberta Biennial of Contemporary Art at the Art Gallery of Alberta. McEwen is currently a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Minnesota, Department of Art, Minneapolis, MN.