

Artist Statement:

Car culture and commercialism have been recurrent subject matter in my painting for some time, and the juxtaposition of the natural world coexisting alongside it interests me. After experimenting with painting deer earlier this summer, it made sense to create this new series as something new that also fits into the continuity of my studio practice.

In this exhibition, I was thinking about capturing a sense of magic within a landscape; interactions between nature, manmade infrastructure and the sublime. I'd like to think of these works playing out like a narrative; driving with my wife and dog inside our car, spotting deer, watching the leaves change colour and the light cast shadows on the pavement. In this sense, I feel this series has become partially autobiographical, influenced by several highway trips back and forth between Saint John and Halifax over the last few months.

I'd like to think that I'm at a point where I'm maturing as a painter, refining my approach and decision making while questioning how and what and why I want to paint. This process led to some interesting results, including two self portraits, the first I've made in 14 years. I've also been using photography as a reference tool for sometime, making photomontage studies to work from, but now I am embracing some of the imperfections and gridding that comes from the process of layering paint on the canvas. Segments of roadside scenery are stacked and arranged together, forming a modern tapestry of wildlife and foliage. Representing the periphery of nature; dark fleeting silhouettes of deer are rendered less as individual animals, but more as part of the landscape. In these abbreviated and combined spaces, the highway becomes a romanticized background setting of a love story.

Thankyou to Buckland Merrifield Gallery for hosting this exhibition.

Jack Bishop November 2019

