

Allan Stone Gallery



Richard Hickam: Four Decades

April 3 – May 24, 2013

Opening Reception: Wednesday, April 3, 6–8 pm

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Richard Hickam, *Nadeau's Choice*, 1983
oil on canvas, 18 x 16 ½ in., 46 x 42 cm

Allan Stone Gallery is pleased to present **Richard Hickam: Four Decades, April 3-May 24, 2013**. The exhibition of approximately thirty paintings and works on paper surveys this nonconformist's underlying dedication to abstraction and confrontation, from his 1970s photorealism through recent unsparingly raw figuration. His thirteenth solo exhibition with Allan Stone Gallery will include a group of new works epitomizing the magnitude of Hickam's expressive capacity.

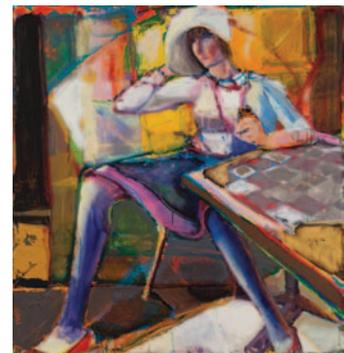
In the 1970s, Allan Stone Gallery first exhibited Hickam's de rigueur and stylized photorealist paintings. Though exquisitely rendered, these paintings and drawings of provocative characters in interior settings of densely patterned drapery and wallpaper belie a penchant for the abstraction fundamental to his vocabulary. *Jolynne Through Window* (1972) depicts a realistically described woman peeking out through a color field "wall," and marks a fusion of the formal and material concerns that have unfolded over Hickam's career.

In the 1980s, Hickam became restless within the prescribed confines of a technical photorealistic style and opened the door to a looser, open-ended approach to figuration, guided by spontaneous and intuitive paint application. Not only are the forms and contours of these heads and figures dictated by the physical behavior of the paint, so are the personalities and nature of the characters that populate these works. Influences of a Fauvist Matisse as well as the loose brushwork and meaty angularity of early Diebenkorn become apparent in works like *A Fickle State* (1981), *Nadeau's Choice* (1983), and *Closing Time* (1989).

By removing the figures from the "interiors"—the faceted and subdivided backgrounds—Hickam segued to a series of non-objective abstractions through the mid-1990s. The clashing planes, stripes and



Jolynne Through Window, 1972
oil on canvas, 72 x 60 in., 183 x 152 cm



Closing Time, 1989
oil on canvas, 39¼ x 37½ in., 100 x 95 cm

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patterns in works such as *Miami Connection* (ca. 1993) and *Hoaglands House* (1991) synthesize his earlier photorealist drapes and wallpaper with an expressive gestural impasto. In the mid-90s, the spatial implications of these pure abstractions transitioned Hickam back to imagery and subject matter through an atmospheric group of interiors and landscapes.

Since the late 1990s, increasingly visceral and expressive figuration and still life have dominated his practice. In quotidian subjects haloed with color, Hickam's still lifes, such as *Daily Bread* (2001), invoke Thiebaud amped up with an intensity verging on psychedelic. The more tempered, even elegant posture of the earlier figures became displaced by an uninhibited "carnavalesque"¹ wildness harkening to Soutine and Bacon, as in *Concealed Muse* and *The Scream* (each 2012). "To imbue portraits of imaginary individuals with a kind of vague familiarity"² Hickam uses the free associative potential of abstraction, inviting allusions to characters like *The Teacher* (2004), aptly dubbed in *The New York Times* as "universals."³ Akin to figurative painters such as Dana Schutz or George Condo, in a decidedly contemporary attitude about method and risk, Hickam reconciles a sense of detachment with a sense of imperative. Hickam distinguishes himself among a coterie of painters through history willing to embrace the absurdities of their paradigm as a conduit to significance.

Richard Hickam (b. 1944, Los Angeles) received a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute, MO, in 1966, and a MFA from the University of New Mexico in 1968, both in painting. He has taught at Kendall College of Art and Design in Grand Rapids, MI (1968), and the Columbus College of Art, OH (1969-73). His work has been exhibited in several museums including The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH; Boston University College of Fine Arts; and The Cleveland Museum of Art; and in galleries across the US. His work has been reviewed and reproduced in *Art in America*, *The New York Times*, *Artnews*, *Artforum*, *Fortune Magazine* and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Hickam lives and works in Elyria, OH.

^{1,2} Vincent, Steven, "Richard Hickam at Allan Stone," *Art in America*, October 2005.

³ Glueck, Grace, "Richard Hickam 'Beyond the Surface,'" *The New York Times*, February 18, 2005.



Miami Connection, ca. 1993
oil on canvas, 40 x 32 in., 102 x 81 cm



Daily Bread, 2001
oil on canvas, 10 1/2 x 11 1/2 in., 27x29 cm



The Scream, 2012
oil on canvas, 12 1/2 x 10 in., 31 x 25 cm

Allan Stone Gallery opened in 1960 showing works by Willem de Kooning, Cesar, Joseph Cornell, Barnett Newman, and a host of then-emerging artists like Andy Warhol, Wayne Thiebaud, Richard Estes, Robert Ryman, Eva Hesse, and John Chamberlain. The gallery, at its new location at 5 East 82nd Street, New York City, continues to present contemporary and mid-career art, interspersed with thematic exhibitions from the Allan Stone Collection, while maintaining a tradition of expertise in the Post-War New York School.

For further information or photographic material, please contact Bo Joseph or Allison Stone Stable, tel. 212.987.4997, e-mail: bo@allanstonegallery.com
GALLERY HOURS: Wed – Sat 12 – 5 and by Appointment.

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