

MILES

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MICHAEL REAFSNYDER

14 MAY – 20 JUNE 2026
525 WEST 22ND STREET

NEW YORK - Miles McEnery Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new paintings by Michael Reafsnyder, on view at 525 West 22nd Street from 14 May through 20 June 2026. This is Reafsnyder's eighth solo exhibition with the gallery. The exhibition is accompanied by a digital catalogue with an essay by Jonathan Griffin.

Reafsnyder's canvases convey an exuberant and celebratory tone, emphasizing delight, glee, and exhilaration through thick layers of paint. The profound enjoyment derived from viewing these nuanced surfaces stems from their wealth of hues, an abundance of painterly gestures, and a diverse array of enigmatic sculptural compositions. The paintings render palpable the present moment of our engagement and seek to bridge a gap between the senses of sight and touch.



In his most recent and compelling body of work, Reafsnyder executes a stylistic shift, most immediately noticeable in his intentional and constrained spectrum of color. Moving away from the vibrant, saturated hues that characterized his previous paintings, the focus now is on the dense, evocative fields of white and black acrylic paint. Jonathan Griffin writes, "Photographs cannot do justice to Reafsnyder's paintings, which are thickly and vigorously dimensional. He uses a variety of tools—which include brushes, but also squeegees, trowels, and sheets of Plexiglas—to apply and manipulate heroic quantities of acrylic paint."

This approach imbues the paintings with a sense of intentionality, striking gravity and allowing the formal elements of texture, light, and gesture to come to the forefront. These works begin with the figuration of a mermaid: which Griffin writes, "the mermaids wallow in this immersive depth and invite us to join them. Sometimes, as with pictures like *Mermaid Play* (2024), the figures of the inanely smiling mermaids are almost illegible—literally subsumed by tone and color. These mermaids also appear often in the early underpainting of Reafsnyder's canvases, before they are sunk beneath choppy layers of thick acrylic."

Acting as a symbol of a liminal state, caught between the realms of land and sea, the mermaid is employed to capture the fundamental experience of painting and the artist's desire to become an intrinsic part of the artwork.

MICHAEL REAFSNYDER (b. 1969 in Orange, CA) received his Master of Fine Arts degree at the ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena, CA in 1996 and his Bachelor of Arts degree at Chapman University in Orange, CA in 1992.

Reafsnyder has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Artissima, Turin, Italy; Las Vegas Art Museum, Las Vegas, NV; Miles McEnery Gallery, New York, NY; Uplands Gallery, Melbourne, Australia; W.C.C.A., Singapore; Western Project, Culver City, CA, and elsewhere. His work has been included in group exhibitions at the Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA; Blaffer Gallery, University of Houston, Houston, TX; Guggenheim Gallery, Chapman University, Orange, CA; The Jones Center for Contemporary Art, Austin, TX; Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, CA; and the Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR.

Reafsnyder's work may be found in the collections of the Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH; Frederick R. Weisman Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; Harvard University, Cambridge, MA; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, San Diego, CA; Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR; UC Irvine Langson Orange County Museum of Art, Costa Mesa, CA and elsewhere.

In 2022, Reafsnyder was awarded a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant.

The artist lives and works in Orange, CA.

For press inquiries, please contact press@milesmcenery.com

Image: *Swishy*, 2025, Acrylic on linen, 44 x 36 inches.