

LewAllenGalleries

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Ben Aronson: Perspective and the Ephemeral

Exhibition Dates: September 29 – October 22, 2017

Opening Reception: Fri, September 29, 5 – 7 pm

Gallery Hours: Mon – Fri, 10-6
Sat, 10-5 Sun 11-4

LewAllen Galleries

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Manhattan Sunrise, 2010,
oil on panel, 60 x 31.5 in



Last Summer Over Fifth, 2016,
oil on panel, 12 x 12 in

Santa Fe, NM – LewAllen Galleries is proud to present the first solo exhibition in Santa Fe by Ben Aronson, whose work is highly noted for its visceral, painterly portrayal of the true sensory atmosphere of the urban environment. Opening on Friday, September 29 with a reception that evening from 5:00-7:00 PM, *Perspective and the Ephemeral* will be on view through Sunday, October 22.

Ben Aronson is recognized as one of America's most respected painters of the contemporary urban landscape. Aronson's signature synthesis of realism and abstraction expressively translates the everyday reality of metropolitan forms and life – skyscrapers, streets, stop signs, sidewalks, and inhabitants – into resplendent tableaux of urban geometry and motion,

light, and shadow. His remarkable portrayal of the material sensations of the city has earned Aronson status as a unique and highly regarded voice in contemporary American landscape painting.

The artist's expressive painterly style is characterized by fluid, yet restrained brushwork. "The main objective is not merely to capture physical likeness," Aronson says, "but rather to aim for the most concentrated form of a powerful visual experience." This gestural application of paint – while

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underpinned by a precision indicative of a remarkable eye for realism – conveys his imagery of streets, buildings, and faceless figures through suggestions of implied movement and space.

The effect of Aronson's gestural paint application, and too the uncanny power of his painting, resides in the artist's ability to transport the viewer directly into the vital, energized heart of the city. Aronson renders this sophisticated engagement with the urban world in fleeting glimpses of movement and evanescent light – the cosmopolitan grid alternately sharpened and blurred into streaking geometry and hard-edged shadow.

Art critics have long been captivated by Aronson's striking contribution to the tradition of American landscape painting. Art historian Joanna Fink, in 2006, wrote: "Aronson creates a continuum that begins at the turn of the 20th century and ends at the tip of his brush. But while he carries with him the accumulation of his study of the art of the past, it is ultimately Aronson's own experience, his own hand which guides the brush." In 2007, arts writer George Tysh noted Aronson's firm place in art history – positioning him with Edward Hopper, Charles Sheeler, and Fairfield Porter: "[All four are] realists whose compositions express an acute awareness of underlying geometries and forms, and who never forgot about the paint in painting." (George Tysh, *The Metro Times*, February 2007)

The artwork included in *Perspective and the Ephemeral* include more than just urban landscapes. Also on view are stunning floral still lives that reveal Aronson's interest, too, in the more delicate effects of light and shadow on a water glass or rose petal. The sensation of the fleeting moment remains the same – just as the effects of light on a street corner are constantly changing, we are reminded that the flower, in all of its beauty, remains in bloom only for a brief period of time.

Aronson was born in Boston to two remarkable artists. His mother, Georgianna Nyman, was the highly respected portrait painter of the United States Supreme Court justices; his father, David Aronson, was a noted sculptor and a founding member of the legendary Boston Figurative Expressionist Movement of the 1940s and 1950s.

Ben Aronson enrolled at the School of Fine Arts at Boston University and studied under Reed Kay, John Wilson, and James Weeks, who introduced Aronson to the Bay Area Figurative Movement. Aronson was also under the tutelage of Philip Guston and worked as his studio assistant.

Aronson's paintings are included in the permanent collections of more than fifty museums, including the De Young Museum in San Francisco; San Diego Museum of Art; National Academy Museum, New York; Boston Museum of Fine Arts; Detroit Institute of Arts; Eli & Edythe Broad Museum, Michigan; Suzhou Museum in Jiangsu Province, China; New



Urban Reflections, 2014,
pastel on board, 30 x 30 in

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Orleans Museum of Art, Houston Museum of Fine Arts; Butler Institute of American Art, Ohio; National Museum of Fine Arts, Malta; New Mexico Museum of Art; Takaoka Art Museum, Japan; The Orangerie in Gera, Germany; and the Denver Museum of Contemporary Art.



Closed Ramp, 2010,
oil on linen, 84 x 74 in



Taxis on Madison, 2016,
oil on panel, 60 x 60 in



Red Poppies, 2016,
oil on panel, 52 x 48 in