

For Immediate Release
May 21st , 2025

“Interior Spaces: *Beyond the Surface*”



Brandt Gallery is honored to present “Interior Spaces: *Beyond the Surface*”, a solo-exhibition featuring Columbus-based artist, Richard Lillash. In his newest interior series, featuring eleven oil paintings of varying scales, Lillash depicts modernist still lifes composed of curated items from his everyday life alongside patterns and motifs found in his international travels. From floor tiles to table textiles to drapery, these visual elements lay the groundwork on which his morning coffee and spectacles further layer the composition. With the addition of a city sky line and friendly felines peeking out from various nooks, this series creates an intriguing snapshot of his personal world, as well as envisioning the interior spaces of other artists revered by Lillash.

“Interior Spaces” is a richly layered and symbolic series that is heavily influenced by a variety of artistic genres, styles, places and historic artists. It has evolved from his previous still-life series’ to extend into and include other artists’ worlds. Many of the works are renderings of what Lillash envisions artist studios might look like in the present. Lillash also explores the theme of place in the series, particularly his love for Cuba, its people, and Mid Century Cuban artwork. This series was greatly influenced by Cuban artist Amelia Palaez, who in turn depicted her environment of dwelling in Havana, Cuba in the 1930’s. Her studies of the various details of this era, such as the tiles, foliage, family table linens, are all elements that Lillash incorporated into his own work. One of the pieces in particular is a homage to the spirit and resilience of the Cuban people in the face of immense challenges, such as nightly blackouts.

Richard Lillash’s observational painting exemplifies exceptional craftsmanship and artistic precision. His active brushwork and application of saturated color is effective at breaking down light, form and color into distinct brushstrokes, gesturing to the building blocks that make up the world around us. Post-Impressionist painting has also been an immense influence on his practice, as this series features its

signature approach of vibrant color, pattern, and exaggerated perspective. This exhibition also depicts elements of Theorem Painting, a delicate and highly detailed form of stenciled painting, which has a rich history rooted in 19th century American Folk traditions. The baskets of fruit that can be observed in his various paintings are also a reference to the historical Americana style. Lillash gleaned from these styles, and his extensive experience in editorial illustration, to create works that almost reflect collage elements, but with oil paint. Mathematical motifs of symmetry and geometry frequently appear, as Lillash employs T-square templates to repeat patterns, and razor blade mark making to create desired linear effects. Texture is also a significant part of Lillash's compositions. He applies oil paint to sand and gesso that has been applied to a canvas or panel. This creates an uneven, but nuanced surface. Flashes of bare canvas, or tinted board create an air of spontaneity and effortlessness. Lillash's use of seamless linen liners as mats also harken back to the Theorem painting influence.

Interior paintings are traditionally images of the interior decoration of a room or building on a canvas. In such works, artists show the size, design and function of the room, highlighting the elements of the era, as well as the national and social affiliation of people. This genre depicts a person's life through the world of things around them. The Philosopher Georg Hegel referred to an interior as a "kind of human clothing". This new body of work is permeated with elements from Lillash's own interior world- be it peonies and dahlias from his garden, a Marsden Hartley book reference, or cats, and more cats. Essentially the exhibition encapsulates his primary influences of modernism, illustration, folk and Americana craft.

Richard Lillash is a Columbus-based artist, who amongst other artistic pursuits, has also worked as an illustrator for over thirty years. Lillash is a graduate of Columbus College of Art & Design and has an extensive national collector base. He has participated in the Highlands Nature Sanctuary Artist Residency and was selected to create a large commission for the Downtown Hilton 2.0. Lillash has had the honor of visiting Havana, Cuba three times for educational artist exchanges, as well as being on exhibit in the recent 2024 Havana Biennial.

"Interior Spaces: *Beyond the Surface*" is on view from Friday, June 13th, with an artist's reception from 5-8pm. The exhibition will be on display through July during gallery hours, Wednesday through Friday, 11-5pm, Weekends 1-5pm and by private appointment. Private appointments and early previews can be requested by emailing brgalleries@gmail.com or calling 614.223.1655.