

# ALEXANDRE

## Stephen Westfall



### **Stephen Westfall: Persephone**

**November 4–December 22, 2021**

**Opening reception: November 6, from 2 to 5 pm**

**Alexandre**

**291 Grand Street, New York**

Alexandre is pleased to present a solo show of works by painter Stephen Westfall titled *Persephone*. Including recent oil paintings and gouaches along with two large-scale wall murals *Threshold* and *Fling*, the exhibition marks a departure from the artist's trademark grid paintings towards a more abstract and playful topology of diamonds, triangles, and trapezoids. *Persephone* marks the artist's first solo show at Alexandre since the gallery announced his representation in 2019.

Ranging from a complete departure from any semblance of a grid, such as in *By Right of the Wood* (2020), to an implication of a grid in works such as *Mystery Train* (2021), the selection of works in *Persephone* subverts the hard-edge abstraction and precisionist style for which Westfall is known. In these recent works, mismatched shapes are precariously stacked aside and on top of one another, seeming to be on the verge of toppling over off the canvas. These rambling compositions also possess an emerging symbolist quality suggestive of landscapes, perhaps a result of Westfall finding inspiration in the surroundings of his Hudson Valley home during the various lockdowns of the past two years: criss-crossing branches, telephone poles and their bowed lines, the light of the sky as the sun sinks into the horizon.

Using as many as eight layers of paint to achieve a specific color, Westfall creates his compositions with contrasting hues ranging from bold to subtle, light to dark. The seemingly-simple combination of these disparate colors imbues the works with energy and movement, rendering the canvases as expressions of freedom and specificity of place. Citing Blinky Palermo, Agnes Martin, Ellsworth Kelly Navajo rugs, and NASCAR scoreboards as past influences, Westfall creates palettes that, in the words of Faye Hirsch, "breathe within and upon a surface that has no limitations."

In addition to the works on canvas and paper, Westfall will install two floor-to-ceiling wall murals at the entrance of the gallery—a genre of painting that Westfall has engaged with since 2007. Public works by Westfall include a commission from the MTA at the 30th Avenue Station in Queens, New York, and site-specific works at the University of California Santa Barbara's Museum of Art, Design, and Architecture, Art OMI, and Rutgers University.

291 Grand Street, New York, New York 10002

25 East 73rd Street, 2nd Floor, New York, New York 10021 212.755.2828 [alexandregallery.com](http://alexandregallery.com)

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This exhibition is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue with an essay by author, curator and critic Faye Hirsch.

Stephen Westfall (b. 1953) received his MFA in 1978 from the University of California, Santa Barbara. His first solo exhibition in 1984 at Tracey Garet in New York's East Village earned reviews that took note of his particular brand of geometric abstraction. Exhibitions followed during the 1980s and into the 1990s at Daniel Newburg Gallery in New York, Galerie Paal in Munich, and Galerie Wilma Lock in St. Gallen, Switzerland. An exhibition of paintings took place at Andre Emmerich Gallery in New York in 1995, followed by several exhibitions at Lennon, Weinberg, Inc., and Galerie Zurcher in Paris. Recent work has been exhibited at Kunstgalerie Bonn in Germany and David Richard Gallery in Santa Fe. Westfall is a professor at the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University.

Image: Stephen Westfall, *Persephone's Lava Lite*, 2021. Oil on canvas, 24 7/8 x 18 7/8 inches

**General inquiries:**

[inquiries@alexandregallery.com](mailto:inquiries@alexandregallery.com)

**Press inquiries:**

[team@danamannix.com](mailto:team@danamannix.com)

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