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EST. 1976

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STEPHEN PENTAK  
*More or Less*

March 30th – May 6th, 2017

NEW YORK, NY—February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017—Kathryn Markel Fine Arts is pleased to present *More or Less*, Stephen Pentak's eighth solo show with the gallery.

Stephen Pentak's landscapes are variations on iconic themes. The scenes he paints from memory are familiar like a favorite bend in a river from childhood, and relish in how light affects nature. They appear tranquil and pristine from afar. Yet, as you step closer the evidence of his untraditional tools appear. His sweeping broad strokes of individual color are revealed, and one realizes that Pentak leans far more toward abstraction than originally perceived.



2016, XLI 2016  
48 x 86 in, oil on birch panel

In Pentak's latest body of work, he plays with further tricks of the eye by concentrating on diptychs and triptychs. Some are pushed together so that the edges call to mind a Japanese screen once the subtle interruption in the surface is spotted. Others are separated in such a way that the space between the canvases somehow manages to blend into the scene, appearing at first as another one of the thin birch trees Pentak favors. They can be perceived as one painting, or distinct compositions. The works constantly encourage a conversation across the boundaries of the planes.

As our understanding of Pentak's work shifts back and forth between representational and abstract, grand composition and triptych, it mirrors our relationship to the natural world itself. How we feel we might fit into our environment, it turns out, is also a fabricated story we tell ourselves. What we were so sure of previously constantly changes before our eyes, shaking up our beliefs of how our surroundings, and Pentak's paintings, are constructed.

Stephen Pentak has exhibited widely throughout the United States and around the world, including at The Drawing Center, the Columbus Museum of Art, the Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art, and the Wexner Center for the Arts. His work is in many prominent public and private collections. He has an MFA in Painting from the Tyler School of Art at Temple University and a BA in Art from Union College. He lives and works in upstate New York.

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