

I N M A N G A L L E R Y

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 19, 2021

Inman Gallery is pleased to present

Tommy Fitzpatrick *Simulated Structures*

November 20, 2021 –
January 8, 2022

Open house, Saturday, November 20
Artist will be present 1-4 pm



Tommy Fitzpatrick, *Domus*, 2021
acrylic and oil on canvas and panel
48 x 48 x 2 in (121.9 x 121.9 x 5.1 cm)

Inman Gallery is pleased to present the exhibition **Tommy Fitzpatrick: *Simulated Structures***, on view November 20, 2021 through January 8, 2022. The show will open concurrently with **Brad Tucker: *Natural Numbers*** on Saturday, November 20, with an all-day open house. Both artists will be present from 1–4 pm.

Tommy Fitzpatrick's painting practice has always been rooted in and inspired by architecture. Prior to 2020, Fitzpatrick worked from models—either handmade and photographed, or constructed digitally—to make his paintings, which hold a careful balance between abstraction and representation. Working from these models, he would translate volume, perspective, and light into hard-edged pattern, pairing a geometric articulation of space with an insistence on painted surface and a careful attention to color. This contradiction between flat pattern and illusionistic depth is the terrain Fitzpatrick has been exploring with increasing sophistication for decades.

In his most recent body of work, on view in the current exhibition, Fitzpatrick explores a new way of developing the ideas for his paintings. Instead of painting from photographs of hand-built structures, he uses an architectural software called SketchUp to make his constructions digitally. Learning the software as he went, he experienced the phenomenon known to all beginners: the "happy accident." These accidents became generative, and they led him to further obfuscate the logical reading of his structures by way of erasure and irrational addition.

Wanting to further unmoor any logical reading of his digital constructions, Fitzpatrick embarked on his second innovation, his textural, troweled-on use of paint. This method of application results in the viewer reading the work as an object-painting first – a conglomeration of three-

dimensional blocks of color – before beginning to dissect the three-dimensional space articulated by the image. Always, however, our reading comes back to pure paint, surface, and color relationships.

The artist has commented that:

"It wasn't until the last two years that I began using non-art tools to paint with. I started using trowels and spatulas, and a lot of the tools I buy from Home Depot are used for laying concrete. ...[T]hose things really opened up painting for me. And whereas I'd been making Plexiglas maquettes to paint from, I'm now using a CAD [Computer-Aided Design] program to draw these forms before I put paint on the [canvas] and make them into sculptural objects. The paintings are becoming singular, and they are illusionistic, but they are more about themselves than they are about portraying something. I'm really letting the paint take over and letting the paint be the first thing you see as opposed to the image."

Fitzpatrick sees architecture as a record of past ideas, and his paintings present both their ruins and their utopian potential. He is particularly drawn to modernist buildings that once heralded the promise of an idealized society that have since been repurposed or forgotten. By subverting categorization of scale, content, or genre, his work simultaneously depicts deconstruction and new creation. *Simulated Structures* engages the tradition of painting and the legacy of Modernism, while embracing science and technology as a new means of inspiration. To continue the cycle of collaboration, Fitzpatrick's CAD renderings are published to SketchUp as open-source materials.

The painted forms in the exhibition straddle sculpture, still life, and abstraction, and his work demonstrates how our perception of the built environment can evolve over time. These latest paintings also embrace a greater ambiguity in the representation of his subjects. By painting structures that no longer exist or have otherwise changed over time, the artist makes them visible in new and exciting ways. *Simulated Structures* mimics how the physical act of painting can be a record of space and time, much like the buildings themselves that source the works' inspiration.

Born in Dallas in 1969, Tommy Fitzpatrick received his B.A. in Fine Art from the University of Texas in Austin in 1991, followed by an M.F.A. from Yale University School of Art in 1993. Fitzpatrick has shown in numerous exhibitions in cities such as Houston, Madrid, New York, London, Dallas, Berlin, Palo Alto, and Seoul over the past 20 years. His 2019 exhibition *Superflux* at Holly Johnson Gallery, was accompanied by a catalogue that included an essay by John Zotos of the Dallas Morning News. Most recently, Fitzpatrick's work was featured in an article in Wallpaper Magazine for his 2021 exhibition *Site* at Qualia Contemporary in California.

His paintings are in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, the Art Museum of South Texas in Corpus Christi, and the Menil Collection in Houston, in addition to corporate collections such as the AT&T Collection, The US Federal Reserve Collection, and Chevron/Texaco Collection. He is a Professor and Head of Painting at Texas State University, and resides in New Braunfels, Texas.