

# Meliksetian MB Briggs

Edgar Ramirez

*From the Rail to the Water*

February 3 - March 16, 2024

Opening Reception:

Saturday, February 3rd 5-7 pm



Meliksetian | Briggs is pleased to present *From the Rail to the Water*, a new body of work by Los Angeles-based artist **Edgar Ramirez**. This is the artist's first solo show in the gallery and his first in Texas.

*From the Rail to the Water* is a continuation of Ramirez's 2023 exhibition, *Smoky Hollow* at Chris Sharp Gallery in Los Angeles. In these exhibitions, the artist expands and refines the formal characteristics of his work, as well as his art historical frame of reference. The new show features a group of Ramirez's *Smoke* and *Remnant Paintings*.

Of this new exhibition, Ramirez states:

"The works were always meant to be split into two shows. The larger *Smoke/Stacks* paintings in *Smoky Hollow* and the smaller *Smoke* and *Remnants* in *From the Rail to the Water* at Meliksetian | Briggs. The idea for the shows originated through locale, movement, and space: refineries and railways near the port of Los Angeles; the moving, yet seemingly idle cargo.

"During the time I had conceived both shows (late 2022/early 2023), cargo was at a halt and overflowed from the container yards onto the residential streets in the neighboring community. Ships were backed up; truckers, longshoremen, terminal and railway operators worked with no stoppage and were on the brink of a strike."

"From the rail to the water - contextualized through the ubiquity of the cargo containers stacked to sublime abundance, spilling over onto residential streets are systems of disruptions akin to the disruptions evident in the paintings. Reminiscent of the predatory loan posters housed in neighborhoods of relative need and stretched and colorized with the Andy Warhol's *Shadow Paintings* in mind, this show, an extension of *Smoky Hollow*, is a more meticulously and carefully thought through process of production and repetition. The gesture of marks creating negative space are also in dialogue with French Hungarian post-war painter Simon Hantai through the focus on areas of absence."

"*Smoke Paintings* draw upon hand-drawn sketches I make of the refinery smokestacks. The approach to both the large and small paintings contain a repetitive quality influenced by my years in production and manufacturing, which consisted of a mechanical and recursive procedure; a uniformity that obliged the operator to perform like a machine. My process is characterized by a prescribed system of repetition and multiplicity: splitting the cardboard sheets, painting the sheets, stacking the sheets, and ripping the sheets through means of decollage, yet no two works are alike."

"The smallest group of new works, both in number and in scale, called the *Remnant Paintings* are comprised of scraps from the *Smoke Paintings*. Discarded pieces, yes, but in my world, there's always a use for scraps and remnants"

**Edgar Ramirez** (b.1989) lives and works in Los Angeles. He received his Master of Fine Art from ArtCenter College of Design, Pasadena, in 2020, and his Bachelor of Fine Art from Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles in 2018. He has had two solo exhibitions at Chris Sharp Gallery (2022 and 2023), Los Angeles and his work has been featured in a number of two-person and group exhibitions, including shows at Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles, Lisson Gallery, New York (2023); François Ghebaly, Los Angeles, the Long Beach Museum of Art, the Mistake Room, Los Angeles (2022), and Show Gallery, as part of his residency at Quinn Emanuel Artists-in-Residence, Los Angeles (2022).