ALMINE RECH

Joe Andoe
Rainbow Road part 2

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"One day in 1974 I was 18 and in my car on the far edge of east Tulsa with my Instamatic camera when I realized how beautiful everything was.
I guess I never got past it."
- Joe Andoe

Almine Rech Gallery is pleased to present *Rainbow Road Part 2*, an exhibition of paintings by the New York based painter Joe Andoe. This is the artist's first solo show with Almine Rech Gallery, featuring all new works created between 2017 and 2018.

Serving as a sequel of sorts to Andoe's 2016 film *Rainbow Road*, the exhibition speaks to the dogged consistency of an iconic artist whose paintings have always remained fresh over the past forty years, due in part to the virtuosic energy with which he has continually refined his process, using a signature technique by which he paints thickly then wipes away the excess paint to dreamlike effect.

Meticulously humble in his choice of subject matter, Andoe simply looks for excuses to paint, and finds one in his recent roadsides, most of them locations around his hometown of Tulsa Oklahoma which he painted from google street view. These prototypical roadsides are indeed specific locations, but in their calculated commonness they could just as easily be anywhere else. For instance, in the work *Rainbow Road Plain #2* (2017) a stark white line bisects a strip of asphalt in the lower left corner, while a thick flurry of strokes merely suggests grasses and trees at the side of the road, effectively reducing the roadside to its pure form. Some of the roadsides have specific stories to tell—such as *Rainbow Road 5/25/18 (for JP)*, which was inspired by Jackson Pollock's *Number 1* (1949)—but Andoe is less interested in illustrating any literal narrative than he is in the practice of painting, and thus when he finds a subject which offers him an entry point into the canvas, he dives in.

The roadsides, while not quite conforming to linear perspective, nevertheless possess a defined sense of space, whereas in most of his other works Andoe situates his subjects in a void; flowers and horses emerge from an undefined, monochrome field of paint, giving the works a minimalist quality and inducing a sense of tunnel vision in the viewer. Andoe has long worked in monochrome, describing the effect achieved as "a big pool, a clear space." And hence, in paintings such as *Leslie Lee*, we can see a horse rendered in shades of gray, seemingly floating, frozen in mid gallop, isolated from all context in a pool of black paint. Another portrait of the same horse, *Leslie Lee 2/13/18*, repeats the same composition almost identically, but while the horse's feet are in a slightly different configuration, the more noticeable variation between the two works lies in the negative space around the figure, which shows more conspicuous signs of wiping in the former painting than in the latter. This sort of relentless experimentation evinces the singular focus with which Andoe has continuously attacked a chosen set of formal challenges over the course of his career, digging deeply into his practice in pursuit of something both singularly personal and universally relatable at the same time.

There is a timeless quality to Andoe's paintings, and an incorrigible insouciance to the way he paints—a lingering trace of the prankster who refuses to conform, as he continues to paint the same subjects over and over again, bucking the vagaries of fashion and remaining true to his vision: forever following the rainbow road.

- David Willis

Joe Andoe (b. 1955, Tulsa, Oklahoma) lives and works in New York City. Andoe received his MFA from University of Oklahoma in 1981, his work has been featured in solo and group exhibitions at the Daum Museum of Contemporary Art, Sedalia, MI ; Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO ; Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Omaha, NE ; Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, Frankfurt ; Longview Museum of Fine Arts, Longview, TX ; Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, CA; and the Albright Knox Museum, Buffalo, NY among others. His work is in public collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York ; Museum of Modern Art, New York ; Museum of Fine Arts ; Boston ; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York ; San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego ; The Detroit Museum of Art, Detroit ; and The National Gallery of Art, Washington DC. Born in 1955 (Tulsa, Oklahoma), Joe Andoe's work is present in many institutions's collections like the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Fisher Landau Center, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Dallas Museum of Art, among others.