

# NICELLE BEAUCHENE GALLERY

**James Miller**

*Mel's Hole*

February 21–March 29, 2025

Opening Reception Friday, February 27, 6–8pm

Nicelle Beauchene Gallery is pleased to present *Mel's Hole*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by James Miller, and his fourth with the gallery.

A continuation of Miller's ongoing study of light-based media, these new acrylic works on canvas capture deep, illusionistic fields of atmospheric phenomena that parallel the experience of immersion in water, amniotic fluid, or absolute darkness. *Mel's Hole*, named after the mythical bottomless pit near Spokane, Washington, prompts Miller's investigations into endogene caves and abyssal ocean trenches, where bioluminescence, echolocation, and sonar have evolved over millennia. Miller locates prehistoric origin for lens-based technologies and chemical photographic processes in organisms like the vampire squid (*Vampyroteuthis infernalis*)—whose sensory organs emanate psychedelic-colored lights as a biological function inextricably connected to communication and emotion.

With *Mantle*, subtle renderings of light and depth act as compressed volumes of sensory information, describing spectral material, holding time, and conveying presence. Here, light shifts from a passive element into an active force of perception, capable of altering our empirical understanding of form. Paintings like *Battery Acid* are further manipulated by methodically excavating the surface using drills, angle grinders, and sanders to reveal residual strata beneath.

Using airbrushes, spray-tan applicator guns, and weed killer sprayers, Miller expresses a language of pressure, aerosolized volume, and fluidity. Found objects from the local landscape are used as stencils that refract through layers of translucent color. Painted transmissions of light and color render a tangled environment of visual feedback, throwing-off equilibrium and submerging the viewer in an unknowable expanse.

**James Miller** (b. 1986, Spokane, WA) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. He received his MFA from Yale University in 2014. Solo exhibitions include Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, New York (2022, 2019) and Mehoyas, New York (2016) with group exhibitions at Below Grand, New York (2024), the American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York (2021), Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (2020), Y2K Group, New York (2019); Underdonk, Brooklyn (2019); Soloway, Brooklyn (2018); Essex Flowers, New York, NY (2017); and Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, CA (2010). Miller served as the Alex Katz Visiting Artist at The Cooper Union in 2019 and was a recipient of the Dedalus Foundation Fellowship in 2015.