

**PETER BLUM** GALLERY

**ERIK LINDMAN**

Fal/Parsi

September 12, 2020 – October 31, 2020

Viewing Room Descriptions

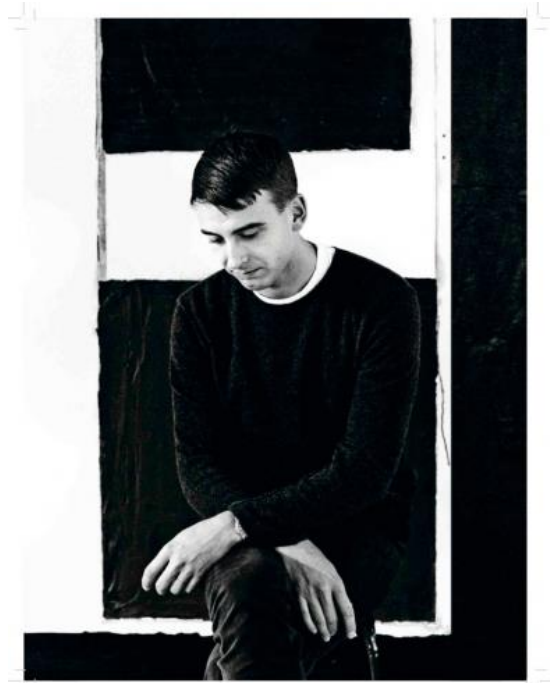
**Peter Blum Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Erik Lindman entitled, *Fal/Parsi* at 176 Grand Street, New York. This is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery. There will be an opening reception on Saturday, September 12, from 10am - 6pm. Please email, call, or [book online](#) to arrange a visit.**

Since the beginning of his artistic practice, Erik Lindman's incorporation of anonymous found surfaces as compositional elements in painting has occupied a central place in his work. Reinterpreting and repurposing cast-aside materials such as shards of steel or canvas webbing, he combines a variation of surfaces in a cascade of decisions with a focus on scale and negative space. Lindman lays down and builds up marks and gestures, ultimately articulating value and attention while asserting the materiality and tactile nature of each painterly composition. His topographical surfaces become the final result of what is buried beneath them, and upon closer inspection, layers of paint reveal further color and traces of discarded elements. As Lindman states, his practice and methods are the most efficient means he has discovered to create a space of reflection and contemplation for viewers to generate their own meanings.

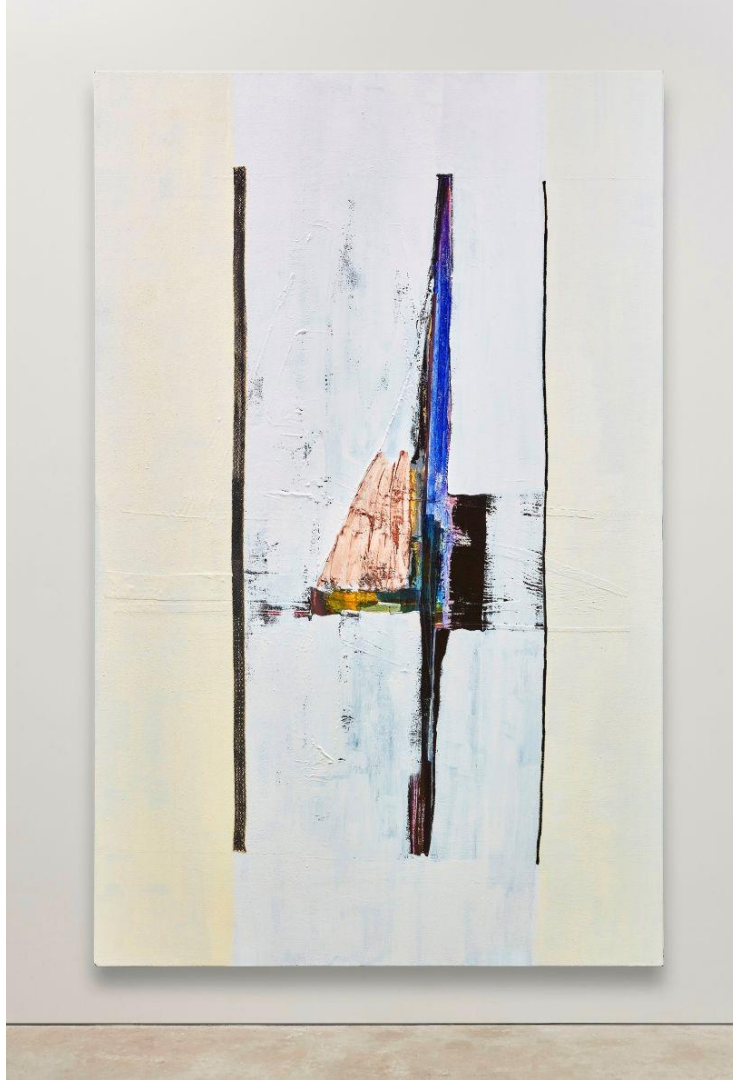
Underpinning the exhibition is the allusion to the myth of the Arthurian knight Parsifal and his quest for the Holy Grail. The title *Fal/Parsi* literally means "Pure Fool" in the Arabic origin of the name. As Lindman comments, "I see the 'Pure Fool' as an analogy for the painter of modern life, the artist who can only manage to take a stab at creation through ignorance of its futility, and yet paradoxically because of this serves as a vital channel." His practice with its inherent content and subject matter intends to add to the complex discourse of abstract painting for his own generation and time. Lindman pursues a new mediation of abstract traditions, both original and eclectic, while instilling subjective importance into his multifaceted process.

**Erik Lindman** (b. 1985, New York) lives and works in New York. He earned his BA from Columbia College, Columbia University in 2007 and received a Yale Norfolk Painting Fellowship in 2006. Lindman was honored at the Hirshhorn Museum's Artist x Artist Gala in 2019. He has also received The Louis Sudler Prize for Excellence in the Arts from Columbia University in 2007, and has received an Ellen B. Stoeckel Fellowship for Yale Norfolk School of Art in 2006. His work has been included in exhibitions at the Kunstalle in Freiburg, Switzerland, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, White Columns in New York, le 109 in Nice, France, Kaviar Factory in Henningsvær, Norway, and Foundation Hippocrène in Paris, among others.

"My presence as an artist serves as a conduit through which each individual viewer is invited to participate in the shared activity of remaking our world, here and now, out of the things that exist around and within us." — **Erik Lindman**



Portrait of Erik Lindman.  
Photo by Billy Kidd.



*Peregrine*, 2018-2019

Acrylic, collaged canvas, woven and canvas webbing and sisal rope on linen

118 x 75 inches (299.7 x 190.5 cm)

(EL19-03)

"Growing up in Manhattan, the peregrine falcon had something of mythic status: a bird of prey that swapped cliffs for skyscrapers, returning from near extinction to become a common feature to the trained eye. This painting can be seen as a meditation on the incongruity of the falcon and the City, which resonates in my mind with painting's persistent adaptation to create meaning in the modern world."

— **Erik Lindman** on *Peregrine*



*Pisces*, 2018

Acrylic, collaged canvas, canvas webbing, sisal rope and luan on linen  
90 x 86 inches (228.6 x 218.4 cm)  
(EL18-05)

"At the time of painting this large-scale work, I had just finished reading C.G. Jung's *Aion* (1959). Impossible to summarize here, Jung's text traces the expansive archetypal symbolism and philosophical implications of the Christ as fish, or rather the resonance of the pisces iconography as a complex locus of contrasts: a symbol encompassing more than a duality, but rather a four part quaternion of opposites between the 'spiritual' and the 'material or chthonic' and 'good' and 'evil'.

To clarify, my open-ended painting process was never intentionally directed towards these concerns. This painting, however, clearly bears the weight of my parallel discovery of Jung's freewheeling text. I found a resonance with the depicted pictorial space of painting as a correspondence to the 'spiritual' and my own use of realia or collaged material to parallel the 'material or chthonic' — and the implicit formulation of 'pure' visuality as 'good' and tactility 'bad' — a space in which I'm using painting as a wedge to open up this calcification and its explicit cultural expression.

Ultimately, the central form is an anchor — a pisces — created from embedded collaged acrylic paint films, fibrous husks of sisal rope, canvas shapes traced from the found form of a plastic barricade and a torn piece of thin plywood (luan). Central and yet divided by a series of collaged horizontal strips of canvas webbing, this form floats in the vacuity of a painted white field delineated by broad black painted bands on either side.

Like the form of the dragon used in historical Chinese painting, this loose invocation of the pisces iconography is not illustrative, but rather a self-reflective vehicle by which the modalities of available visual expression are purposefully mediated."

— **Erik Lindman** on *Pisces*



*Jupiter*, 2017-2018

Found surfaces (Plexiglas), acrylic and epoxy resin putties and pastes on two joined panels  
96 x 96 inches (243.8 x 243.8 cm)  
(EL18-06)

"I found two huge pieces of Plexiglas outside of a bodega in Bushwick that was being remodeled. This was the half-inch thick kind that is often used as a partition between the vendor behind the counter and their customers. The shape had been roughly cut, leaving traces of plastic melted from the heat of a circular saw.

Mindful of the few loose drywall screws dangling from the corners, I picked up these two pieces and carried them down the block to a friend's house, leaving them in her backyard. There they sat for the winter. They were too bulky to take back to my studio immediately on the subway, and as the weather got cold and snowy, I forgot about them.

As the spring came and I returned to my friend's house, these Plexiglas slabs had sat unchanged, leaning against a now green vine covered fence in the same way I'd left them months ago. In the time since I'd first found the slabs, another artist had given me an unused painting panel leftover after unrealized project. The panel had a unique shape and design, one I would not have chosen for myself: a large square format comprised of two rectangular panels that could be bolted together, its scale resulting from the maximum size of a standard 4 x 8 foot plywood sheet, doubled.

Now I found myself with a correspondence between a divided substrate and a divided surface. After moving the Plexiglas to my studio in the back of an Uber, I was initially drawn to the incidental scuffs on the surface and the odd quality of refraction within the space of the clear plastic itself. But as often is the case, during the open-ended process of working with the shape of the surface, balancing its physical form with the visual quality of the overall plane of the painting resulted in a long process of editing, cutting, tearing and painting

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that ultimately blacked out the surface of the Plexiglas itself.

I don't engage with labor as a redemptive form of value creation. Often it just takes a lot of work to make something feel like it hasn't been worked on. This painting took a long time to arrive back at a state of qualified simplicity. Perhaps you would never be able to recognize the history of the former life of the Plexiglas by just glancing at the painting, but perhaps you can feel it upon longer reflection. I don't believe the shape and quality of these specific pieces of black coated Plexiglas would ever be the same as the experience of any other black square."

— **Erik Lindman** on *Jupiter*



*Dahlia*, 2020

Acrylic and collaged canvas webbing on linen

78 3/4 x 59 1/8 inches (200 x 150 cm)

(EL20-14)

"*Dahlia* is a strong example of organic forms held by the painting's material architecture—forms which pull from the representation of nature in painting, coalescing around the sexual ornamentation of flowers and the mordant nature of observation—here distorted to a bodily scale."

— **Erik Lindman** on *Dahlia*



*Paroaria*, 2020  
Acrylic and collaged canvas webbing on linen  
78 3/4 x 59 1/8 inches (200 x 150 cm)  
(EL20-13)

"In this painting perhaps more than any other, I left much of the process visible—an open work where a sense of light emanates from within the ground, behind an artificial plastic white curtain broken by the central red and silver avian form."

— **Erik Lindman** on *Paroaria*





*Blackwater*, 2019-2020

Acrylic, collaged canvas and canvas webbing on linen

70 7/8 x 43 1/4 inches (180 x 110 cm)

(EL20-01)

"The chroma in this painting suggests a reversal, a liminal atmosphere, one I've described as 'evening'—located more in the central blue-white and grey-purple form than the black space which surrounds it. To my eyes, the opening in this shape (revealing the bare linen support) points towards a skull—a form that can be found in many of the other works on view.

Often there is a sense of menace in these works, reflected here in his painting's title, *Blackwater*—alluding to the infamous mercenary military security firm. This name is so conspicuously inconspicuous, that it articulates an attitude I feel accurately summarizes societies' hysterical blindness to the world's horrors. "

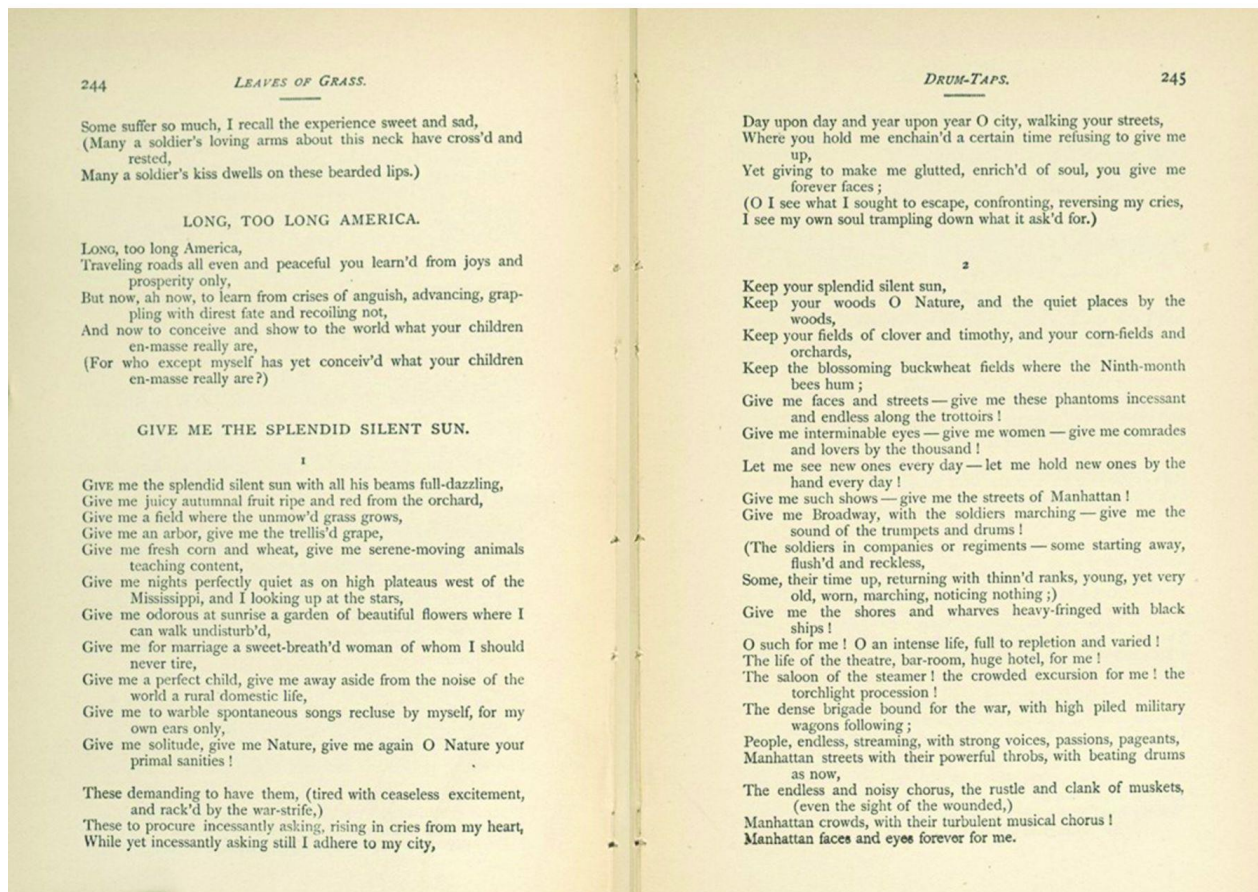
— **Erik Lindman** on *Blackwater*



*Silent Sun, 2020*  
Acrylic and collaged canvas webbing on linen  
78 3/4 x 59 1/8 inches (200 x 150 cm)  
(EL20-08)

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Walt Whitman's, *Give Me The Splendid Silent Sun*, 1865:





*Treille*, 2020  
Acrylic and collaged canvas webbing on linen  
78 3/4 x 59 1/8 inches (200 x 150 cm)  
(EL20-15)

"*Treille* is the most recently completed work in this exhibition—and a clear instance of the embedded canvas webbing serving as a trellis for articulating subdued veils of color."

— **Erik Lindman** on *Treille*



*Galehaut*, 2020

Acrylic, collaged canvas and canvas webbing on linen

78 3/4 x 59 1/8 inches (200 x 150 cm)

(EL20-04)

"Boccaccio uses Galehaut's name – 'Il Principe Galeotto'– as the subtitle of his Decameron (1353), a story that could just as easily work in our strange current historical moment as it did in the fourteenth century. While my painting lacks Boccaccio's humor, this central form, invoking the armless torso from Rodin's *The Walking Man* (1907), is surrounded by the black mysterious unknown just like Boccaccio's sheltered cohort, with only a few vertical collaged cotton bars to grab onto in order to resist falling out of the picture, or the void of our times, holding onto art as a refuge.

In the Arthurian myth, Galehaut, a half man, half giant, longs for the Black Knight, a disguised Lancelot. Despite a certain victory over Arthur's forces, Galehaut lays down his arms in the middle of battle due to his awe of the Black Knight's courage. The villain undergoes a conversion experience through (erotic?) beauty

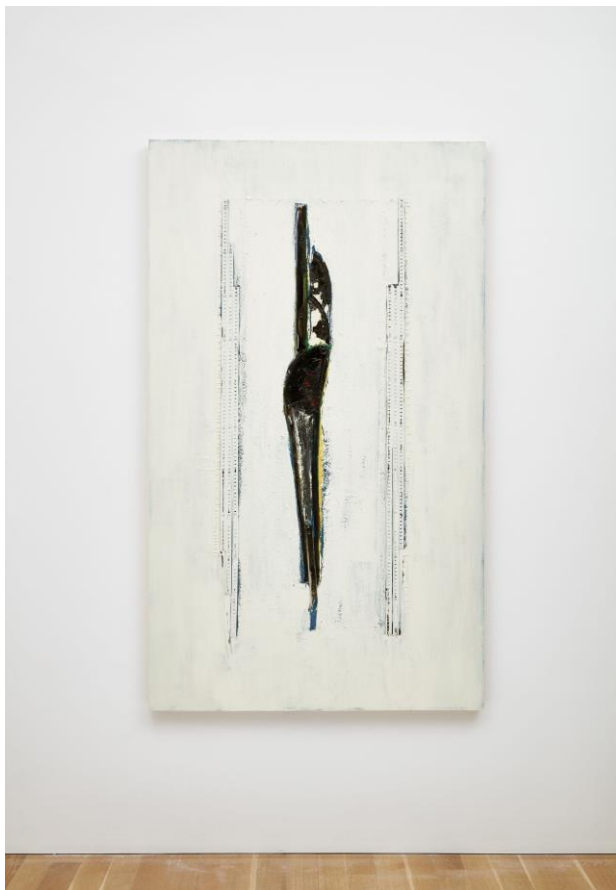
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and becomes a comrade of Arthur's.

Through his involvement in Lancelot's grail quest, the story of Galehaut is linked to the Parsifal myth, the principal allusion underpinning this exhibition – 'Fal/Parsi' being a derivation of the Arabic origin of the hidden name of Parsifal revealed by Kundry, 'Fal Parsi', literally meaning 'Holy Fool.'

I see the 'Holy Fool' as an analogy for the painter of modern life, the artist who can only manage to take a stab at creation through ignorance of its futility, and yet paradoxically because of this serves as a vital channel. Here stands a giant, defeated by love, who cannot raise a finger against what he finds beautiful."

— **Erik Lindman** on *Galehaut*



*Asplund's Lockset*, 2014-2020

Found surfaces (metal), oil, enamel, aluminum and staples on panel

78 x 46 inches (198.1 x 116.8 cm)

(EL20-09)

"This painting is a bridge between my more direct work with found surfaces and my more recent invocation of a lyrical painted language. The work's scraped and repainted surface bears six years of trials towards a new language.

The work's title alludes to the Swedish architect Erik Gunnar Asplund (1885–1940), the principle designer of Stockholm's Skogskyrkogården, which I visited last summer. I was struck by a detail on the door to the cemetery chapel. Just above the handle, small skull protrudes from the black metal, and the lock's chamber is placed squarely in its eye socket. The memory of the door's iconography informed this painting's open central black metal forms."

— **Erik Lindman** on *Asplund's Lockset*



*Black Swan*, 2020

Epoxy resin putty, acrylic and enamel on aluminum composite panel, aluminum angle  
24 x 48 inches (61 x 121.9 cm)  
(EL20-05)

"Rising out of a curtain of transparent black enamel paint, an island rests. Its splayed form is quiet and void, matte and plastic, distinct from the surrounding inky iridescence. While this island is in physical relief, the visual space it occupies is taunted by a central silver opening in the black sludge cascading to the right just off its top side.

The work's proportions would have once demarcated infinite landscape: today its scale and chroma replicates the ubiquity of a touchscreen.

The painting is held by two horizontal parallel bars of aluminum angle and while the manner of the paint's application may betray the work's density, these bars emphasize the object's physicality. The surface, sometimes glossy and sometimes matte, opaque and translucent, pulls the viewer along the bending light shifting across these aluminum bars. With so much visual competition offered by the world, I'll take as much help as I can from shiny things.

The island is a filled resin compound formed from the impression of the pock-marked surface of a discarded yellow polyethylene ice hockey rink guard. There is no intended meaning implicit in this reference: Lasker



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Rink just happens to be en route to my studio.

The incorporation of found surfaces into painting, like the implication of the textured rink guard in this work, has occupied a central role in my art practice over the past decade. The primary motivation for this was simply a way to begin, to respond with and against a part of the world, an anonymous armature on which to drape my subjectivity.

This action in itself has become a referent: the use of the anonymous is a historical vestige of the avant-garde. The action is no longer novel, not radical, and has been enfolded into the act of painting itself. To this list, I would also add the work's use of centration as an anti-composition strategy as well as the expired legacy of the monochrome in the West.

And yet these strategies are not engaged with for the sake of parody. They simply remain the most efficient means I have discovered to create a space of reflection, out of synch with today but perhaps paradoxically it is this atemporality that engenders their undirected power."

— Erik Lindman on *Black Swan*



*Balke 2*, 2019  
Acrylic on linen  
24 x 28 inches (61 x 71.1 cm)  
(EL19-02)

"The Norwegian painter Peder Balke (1804-1887) has fascinated me over the past few years. His paintings are full of melodrama and all sorts of tricks stolen from his background in decorative painting: in essence, they are all 'wrong' from a Western traditionalist standpoint, and yet I find them quite beautiful in their direct efficiency. Why wouldn't you use a rolled cloth to create the texture of a craggy rock chiseled by crashing waves?

When I visited John Zurier in Iceland last summer I was struck by just how closely the drama of the sun setting on the costal landscape reminded me of Balke's work. Balke's paintings are not overstated at all: they are the result of a man using what is at hand to capture a force so huge, he doesn't even try to stake a claim at mimesis. This flaccid concoction communicates just as much as Constable.

It made me reflect on all sorts of material prejudice. Why were all those strange additives manufactured by acrylic paint companies off-limits to 'serious' artists. Gel that changes color in the light, metallic paints, reflective glass beads, textural pumice all seemed viable to me, and not ironic. Have you ever seen the feathers of a starlings change color? It doesn't get more 'natural' than that."

— **Erik Lindman** on *Balke 2*



*Natural History*, 2019  
Acrylic and collaged canvas webbing on linen  
27 1/2 x 23 5/8 inches (70 x 60 cm)  
(EL19-06)

"In recent works, I've collaged canvas webbing into my paintings, using these bands as an objective correlative between the image structure and the material reality of the paintings. As my brush passes over the herringbone twill weave of the webbing, an indexical frottage is created, evoking the sense of something being printed, or mechanically repeated, despite my hand made efforts. In the end, all of points towards the fact that surface is always a coming together of materials made to adhere to each other."

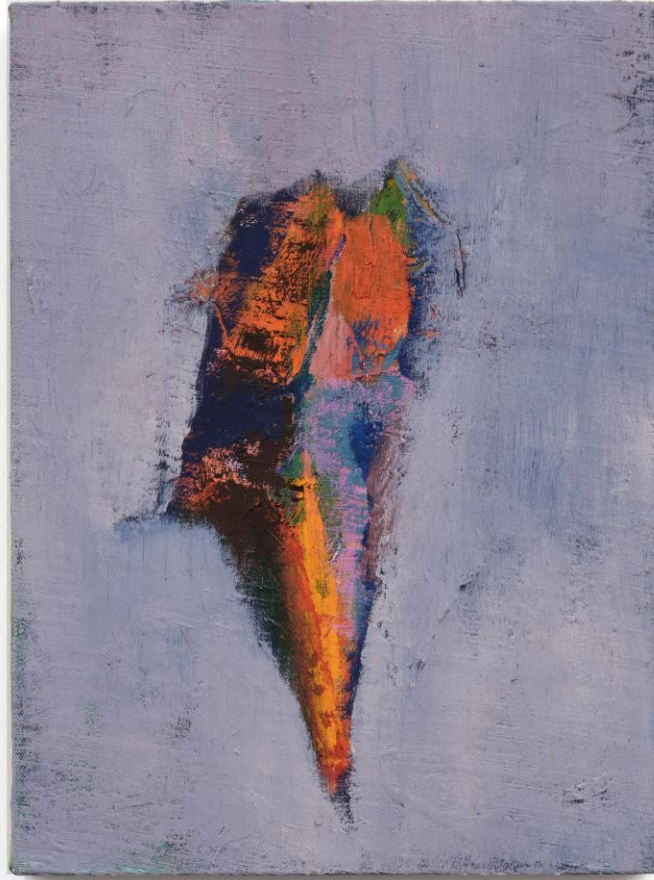
— **Erik Lindman** on *Natural History*



*P.K.*, 2018  
Acrylic, collaged wood and paper on panel  
20 x 16 inches (50.8 x 40.6 cm)  
(EL18-18)

"The transparent Nickel Azo yellow and vegetal drawn forms in this work reminded me of Per Kirkeby's—the "P.K." alluded to in the title—who passed around the time I made this painting."

— **Erik Lindman** on *P.K.*



*Untitled*, 2018-2019  
Oil on linen over panel  
15 1/2 x 11 1/2 inches (39.4 x 29.2 cm)  
(EL19-04)

"I've stumbled my way into a visual language that resembles aspects of mid-century French painting, a type of painting I've never spent much time seriously looking at before. I'm also acutely aware of my own conditioning to see this type of painting as distasteful, irrelevant, indulgent, and generally 'bad.'

Perhaps aspects of the forms and colors here recall late pastoral works of Braque or De Staël's cities on a hill, but that was not my intention. My paintings are not parodic and, upon closer inspection, have a very different material character, a different speed than those of these French painters. Underneath the stereotype and cliché clouding the School of Paris and Arte Informel, I've found and rediscovered for myself a fascinating trove of painting that is still largely undervalued in America.

I'm interested in the way painting can act as a trojan horse, to shift inside of its own skin. I don't find it very interesting to use ideas of bad taste to create an overplayed post-modern pastiche, but rather to re-evaluate expired forms themselves in order to recoup lost pockets of knowledge. In this way, while there is no found surface in these oil paintings, a language of painting itself is found, refilled and becomes new."

— **Erik Lindman** on *Untitled* (EL18-10), *Untitled* (EL19-04), and *Untitled* (EL20-10)



*Untitled*, 2018  
Oil on linen over panel  
11 1/2 x 15 1/2 inches (29.2 x 39.4 cm)  
(EL18-10)



*Untitled (Cobalt Blue)*, 2019-2020  
Oil on panel  
12 x 16 inches (30.5 x 40.6 cm)  
(EL20-10)