

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ERIN CLULEY GALLERY

William Atkinson: *On the Road*

February 17 – March 23, 2024

Opening Reception: February 17, 5 – 7pm



Texas Series #1, 2023, Mixed media on raw canvas, 65 x 91 x 5 in.

Erin Cluley Gallery is pleased to announce *On the Road*, an exhibition of new work by Dallas-based artist, William Atkinson. The exhibition will debut new large-scale mixed media paintings combining formal and conceptual qualities from Abstract Expressionism, photo collage, and Western literature. Reappropriating found photography documenting a midcentury family's road trip from Texas to Colorado, Atkinson honors and disrupts tenets American culture with bold mark-making and expressive gesture.

Transitioning from his subterranean career as a street artist in Los Angeles, Atkinson retained many of his artistic processes—on canvas he works with expediency, often completing a piece in as little as one or two sessions, imbuing his work with a visceral physicality and emotive power. In work like *Texas Series #1*, swaths of raw canvas background seemingly haphazard brush strokes—a collaged photograph of shadowy trees drives mystery into the work's illusive narrative. Drawing inspiration from Abstract Expressionist painters like Franz Kline and Beat poetry—the exhibition's title, *On the Road*, referencing Jack Kerouac's jazzy opus—his techniques privilege painterly force. Atkinson's artistic practice pushes the limits of his body and tools towards their breaking points.

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A Texas native himself, Atkinson juxtaposes the imagery of the anonymous family's road trip, familiar to the artist's lived experience, with the visual language of abstraction. Together, these antithetical subjects and aesthetics offset the binary of high and low culture to interesting effect. While movements like Abstract Expressionism and conceptualism are often associated with coastal cultural capitals—particularly New York and Los Angeles—Atkinson reconsiders the influence of the American South in 20th century art history. Thus, *On the Road* taps into the American cultural consciousness, its spontaneity, grandeur, and often overlooked everyday nuances.

On the Road will be the artist's second solo presentation with Erin Cluley Gallery. It will be exhibited concurrently with *Interwoven*, a group exhibition featuring work by three Dallas-based women sculptors.

William Atkinson is a multi-media collage artist who lives and works in Dallas, TX. Atkinson received his B.A. and M.Ed. from Southern Methodist University. Atkinson's artistic practice combine the languages of abstract expressionism, reappropriated imagery, typography, and street art.

After moving to Los Angeles, CA he founded and operated an art gallery and artist incubator. While in Los Angeles, Atkinson made street art under an anonymous pseudonym garnering critical attention from both underground and mainstream audiences. He went on to be appointed the Operations Director for two renowned art galleries in New York.

His work has been featured in exhibitions internationally including Crewest gallery, Los Angeles, CA; Le Spec Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; Agora Gallery, New York, NY; Van Gogh Gallery, Madrid, Spain and M.A.D.S., Milan, Italy.

He currently teaches sixth-grade Humanities at St. Mark's School of Texas.

Erin Cluley Gallery is a contemporary art gallery representing emerging, mid-career, and established artists from Dallas and the United States. The gallery presents a provocative program of artists working in both traditional and alternative forms including painting, sculpture, new media, photography, sculptural installation and public intervention.

In 2014, Erin Cluley Gallery ignited a creative movement in West Dallas acting as a hub for visual arts and community engagement. After nearly five years on Fabrication Street, the gallery has moved its operation to Riverbend – a development in Dallas' Design District celebrating the intersection between culture and commerce.

In April 2021, Cluley opened Cluley Projects – a satellite location in West Dallas acting as an incubator space focusing on regional artists and providing a platform for

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discovery and mentorship.

For all press inquiries contact
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