

Andrew Edlin GALLERY

Tyler Macko: Beneath Bear Mountain

January 9 - February 28, 2026

Tyler Macko's (b. 1989) palpable curiosity is affixed to the quotidian poetry of place. Whether interpreting his Midwestern roots or, as is the case with his latest work, deepening his understanding of the light and space of the West, Macko's paintings are dioramic worlds that demonstrate how a specific kind of attention can be encoded into dense, sensitively built assemblage. Born in Dayton, Ohio, Macko came of age as an artist there, his eye and mind focused on its often-dingy palette and asynchronistic rhythms. He knew this place the way James Joyce knew Dublin or Hubert Shelby knew Brooklyn.

From a certain perspective Dayton can be thought of as a contemptuous little pugilist of a town. In the first half of the 20th century, it was something of an American lodestar. It emerged from its halcyon youth holding the record for most patents of any American city, for things both small and monumental—a disparate heap of objects and devices that seem to push the world forward, filling odd interstitial gaps with equal aplomb: the electric car starter, the cash register, the pop-top can, the stepladder, Freon, the ice cube tray, the backpack parachute and Cheez-It crackers. It is considered a primary city in the development of a particular and beautiful form of 70's Funk music (Ohio Players) and the home of countless punk and alternative bands (Poetic Justice, Breeders, Guided by Voices). It's a place strangely immune to synopsis.

Gathering objects and materials from the Dayton landscape, Macko's paintings through 2023 are deft portraits of a place that had settled into an attenuated civic depression, renderings of a dusky, rained upon home. The place itself became fodder for the artist to pursue a visual vocabulary and process in which all aspects behind a work of art might be codified. Works from this period were featured in the exhibition *Tyler Macko: A voice from I don't know where* at The Contemporary Dayton in 2023. During an artist talk Macko described how essential it was to be able to draw equally from the grandeur of landscape and history, but also the "beautiful struggle of changing a tire".

Not long after the Dayton exhibition, Macko decamped for Montana where he lives on a secluded cattle and horse ranch on the Shields River. His recent body of work is a synthesis of many things, not the least of which is an embrace of the tradition of American assemblage; Macko, an avid autodidact, pulls directly from his love and deep understanding of Johns and Rauschenberg. These new works are dense with materials culled from this new landscape – foliage, leather, bone and wood. They are imbued with the sense of hope a new home provides.