

## Lifetime Collective / Collective Interview | Ryan Wallace



Ryan Wallace / Guerreo Gallery SF

New York based Collective artist [Ryan Wallace](#) is a busy man. In addition to continually creating his own works, he recently opened the Halsey Mckay Gallery in East Hampton, NY with curator Hilary Schaffner. He also recently curated a show called “Domestic Goods,” at the Eric Firestone Gallery also in East Hampton. We spoke to Ryan to get an in-depth look at all that he has on his plate.

*Tell us a bit about your background.* I was born in New York City. Grew up mostly in Connecticut. Went to school in Rhode Island. I now live and work between Brooklyn and East Hampton, New York.

*How do you typically spend a Saturday night?* Working or spending time with my family.

*Which do you prefer, solo shows or group shows?* Solo shows.

*Is there a message that you hope to convey through your paintings?* No. I want viewers to be inquisitive about their own messages. I hope to pose questions rather than statements.

*What was the impetus for creating Halsey Mckay Gallery?* With the exception of a few galleries, the scene is geared towards high end or secondary market work. It is easy to walk into a gallery in East Hampton and buy a de Kooning, but there aren't as many opportunities for younger artists. That these more established works are on view is what makes it such a great place as an artist and collector. It is more relaxed than the city but still relevant to the contemporary scene. I think we are trying to introduce the community to artists who are active and showing extensively but may not have the official endorsement of blue chip collectors or major institutions just yet.

*What's in the name of the gallery?* Halsey and Mckay are my and my partner Hilary Schaffner's grandmothers' maiden names. Mckay is also my middle name.

*Why choose East Hampton over New York City as the location for your gallery?* There are a lot of great galleries in NYC with similar goals. We have a lot of faith in the artists we work with, and it is so easy to get lost in the shuffle of the New York art scene. We stand out in East Hampton because of our mission. There is a population there that appreciates art and has a long history of supporting artists. Everyone likes the idea of living in the country making and selling art in a beautiful place, but in most locales that isn't a reality. In East Hampton everyone lets their hair down and seems a little more approachable, but they are also greatly informed about contemporary art and are willing to support it.

*What is the most exciting aspect of co-owning a gallery?* Being able to give opportunities to artists and friends who I believe in so thoroughly.

*Patrick Brennan was the the first artist to exhibit work at Halsey McKay. Why him/his work?* We find his work to be incredibly inventive and exciting and knew that it would make a statement about the gallery as a first outing. Opening the doors with Patrick's work on the walls, it is obvious that we won't be showing sailboats or duck paintings.

He had a show ready and galleries in New York had been shy to give him a major solo show due to the challenging nature of his paintings. We are honoured to give him one.



Patrick Brennan/Halsey Mckay East Hampton, NY



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*How do you imagine co-owning a gallery will add or detract from your own art?* There is something very appealing about promoting others than yourself. It is rewarding in a way that furthering your own career isn't. I work a lot and don't sit still very well, so running a gallery will be a welcome challenge for when I am not in the studio.

*Do you have any tips to help people better observe, appreciate and learn from art?* Just look and trust your reaction. Don't assume that you can't understand something if a simple solution isn't immediately apparent. Be open and prepared for your tastes to change. Welcome this.

*As a curator, what was your overall concept for Domestic Goods?* I loosely focused on the theme of the home. I am interested in what this concept means in a transient seasonal community. Last summer I commuted once a week back and forth between Brooklyn and East Hampton and this idea of a home became kind of lost. One of the things that



makes me feel most comfortable is my art collection. I wanted to investigate how other artists would interpret this with the show.



"Domestic Goods" Opening Reception / Eric Firestone Gallery East Hampton, NY

*What are a few neighbourhoods, areas or cities that you see as burgeoning art communities?* New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Los Angeles. There is an interesting thing going on in Baltimore right now. There is a lot of great energy all over the place, but I don't know how anyone is able to make a living without the support found in New York.

*Complete this sentence. The Lifetime Collective is \_\_\_\_\_ how I have clothes on.*