

MORGAN LEHMAN

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Brooklyn artist Leigh Ruple creates moody paintings of Williamsburg



The mundane moments of Williamsburg trespass on Leigh Ruple's canvases. The Brooklyn-based artist's works are inspired by her daily life, featuring stylized, temperamental depictions of objects and figures abstracted within an array of colors and forms.

Her studio is located in East Williamsburg, allowing her to observe the architecture and people within the thriving neighborhood, and the geometries and patterns of the district's local architecture have become motifs of her paintings. Her work also explores the city's nightscape, with changing highlights and shadows. In a painting titled *Nightstand*, the Manhattan skyline is backlit by moonlight, while an assortment of prosaic objects including kitchen gloves, a pair of scissors, and a trimmed plant occupies the foreground, hinting at the inner life of an unseen subject.

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In *Red Door*, a bare-chested man sitting on an inverted tin bucket paints a fence door from blue to red; the red light shining from behind the fence illuminates parts of the man's torso. The placid scene is dramatized with contrasting tones, hues, and lighting effects.

Ruple is an expert in conveying moods through colors and composition. In *Healthful*, the ordinary scene of shopping for apples is exaggerated with backlit lighting and a heightened exaggeration of a mainly red-and-blue palette. The face of the shopper is tinted with magenta, the same shade as the apples in the basket.

Ruple continues to draw references from New York's cityscape and frequently captures the sidewalks, lampposts, animals, and plants with her paintbrush. In many paintings, a main figure takes center stage, often with blank and indifferent expressions; a reference to the solitude and loneliness of living in a bustling city like New York.

Leigh Ruple's most recent exhibition was at the Morgan Lehman Gallery.