

PIETRO ALEXANDER

59 WOOSTER ST · 2ND FLR · NYC

Pietro Alexander presents a group presentation of historic Hudson River School paintings paired with new works by Ryan Oakes and Trevor Oakes.

Gallery One - *Luminous Landscapes* - Group Presentation

Gallery Two - *Eleven-Day Paintings* - Ryan Oakes and Trevor Oakes

On View: September 17 - October 29, 2026

Opening Reception: September 17, 2026, 6 - 8 PM

Gallery Hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 12 - 6 PM

59 Wooster Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY



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NEW YORK — Pietro Alexander is pleased to announce *Luminous Landscapes* and *Eleven-Day Paintings*, the inaugural exhibitions of its fall program, bringing together two presentations that explore the enduring majesty of the Hudson River landscape across nearly two centuries. Together, these exhibitions articulate the gallery's commitment to presenting historical and contemporary works in direct conversation.

GALLERY ONE - *Luminous Landscapes* - Group Presentation, Hudson River School

Featuring Lockwood de Forest, David Johnson, Frank Anderson, Alvan Fisher, Samuel Colman, James McDougal Hart, Henry A. Ferguson, Régis Francois Gignoux, Thomas Birch, Mary Josephine Walters and Elizabeth Gilbert Jerome.

In a his 1836 essay, *Nature*, Ralph Waldo Emerson conceived of the "Transparent Eyeball," a philosophical phenomena in which the observer of nature becomes so consumed with its light and sublimity that the self dissolves into it. Emerson wrote in 1836, "I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all."

The Luminist movement followed a decade and a half later. Perhaps influenced by Transcendentalist thought, and amidst New York City's growing industrial sprawl, the Luminist landscape artists found a subject in the untarnished landscape that lay beyond the city's boundaries.

Hudson River School painters pared down their compositions, focusing on basic landscape elements of water, earth, and sky and abstracting them into mostly horizontal registers, punctuated by very few but sharply defined accents, such as a dominant tree limb or a rocky outcropping against a coastal vista. The spectator of these landscapes becomes keenly aware of light and atmospheric effects as almost tangibly solid presences within the scene.

The Oakes's paintings offer a contemporary and highly attuned response to the Luminist calling of the Hudson River School movement. The juxtapositions created by the two bodies of work reflect the universal sanctity of place and the continually changing effects of weather and time; more broadly, they underscore the importance of ecological perception.

GALLERY TWO - *Eleven-Day Paintings* - Ryan Oakes and Trevor Oakes

The second gallery features new works by Ryan Oakes and Trevor Oakes, identical twins whose paintings emerge from a singular collaborative practice.

Since 2018, the Hudson River has been the focus of the Oakes' most ambitious body of work. Painted from a fixed vantage point overlooking the river in Newburgh, New York, the series is executed on three-dimensional concave canvases shaped to approximate the spherical geometry of human vision, or more simply, the curvature of an eyeball.

Beginning in 2004, the Oakes have pioneered a distinctive method of painting on curved canvases, investigating perception, space, and light. In this series, they introduce a fourth dimension: time.

Each painting is made entirely en plein air over eleven consecutive days. Beginning each morning and working until sundown, the artists complete a single two-inch-wide vertical section, recording the precise atmospheric conditions of that day. Freezing rain, dense fog, brilliant sunlight, shifting winds, and still water become embedded within a single image. The completed painting is not a frozen instant, but a chronology—a landscape accumulated through time.

Seen together, these works reveal the tension between permanence and transience. Geography remains fixed while weather, light, and season continually transform it. In dialogue with the nineteenth-century paintings presented in the adjoining gallery, the Oakes extend the Hudson River School's commitment to direct observation into a contemporary meditation on perception, duration, and the passage of time.

