



*cruisers (cafe)*, 2022, Oil on canvas. 30 x 36 x 1 1/4 in (76.2 x 91.4 x 3.2 cm)

**Steve Locke: *your blues ain't like mine***

New York: October 27–December 17, 2022

Alexander Gray Associates, New York presents Steve Locke: *your blues ain't like mine*, the artist's first one-person exhibition in Chelsea. Featuring recent figurative paintings and sculptures, *your blues ain't like mine* takes its title from Bebe Moore Campbell's landmark novel of the same name. Like Campbell's 1992 text, Locke's exhibition delineates the complicated relationships between identity, power, desire, and violence.

Locke's *cruisers* depict intimate moments between men to better map the connection between identity and desire. Employing a sense of color the artist refined in parallel with his abstract *Homage to the Auction Block* paintings (2019–present), recent *cruisers* emerge as meditations on the power of the gaze. Imbuing a sideways glance with eagerness, uncertainty, and risk, Locke explains these works represent "... possibility ... [and] an acknowledgment of beauty." Further challenging reductive understandings of desire, Locke's *Tongue Paintings* refute traditional representations of masculinity through their open mouth imagery. The series's floating heads and extended tongues lay the foundation for a subversive model of male portraiture that resists the trappings of triumphalism to instead foreground pathos and vulnerability.