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“Amir Nikravan: Mask”

by Gwen Pew

**AT** first glance, American artist Amir Nikravan’s works resemble painted walls that have been scarred by a solid paintbrush. Yet the process of creating – and destroying – them is incredibly complex. He starts off by layering paint upon a canvas, as most painters do. Then, rather than simply standing back and hanging that on the wall, he wraps the canvas in fabric and subjects it to the force of an industrial vacuum bag. The wrinkled surface of the fabric is then sprayed over with various colours using an airbrush. The fabric is then peeled off, stretched out and mounted, while the original painting is destroyed. What’s left is the physical shadow of an object that no longer exists.

Through this curious and labour-intensive procedure, Nikravan hope to explore the limitations – and possibilities – of space. It’s also why he chooses to create marks on these works that resemble walls. The abstract pieces invite viewers to consider which parts of them are real, and which exist only as part of their history.



*Mask*, 2015, Acrylic on fabric over aluminum, 60 x 48”.