

ESTEBAN VICENTE

4 SEPTEMBER - 25 OCTOBER 2025
520 WEST 21ST STREET

NEW YORK – MILES McENERY GALLERY is pleased to announce a focused survey of works by Esteban Vicente. The artist's eighth solo exhibition at the gallery will open on 4 September at 520 West 21st Street, and remain on view through 25 October 2025. The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated publication featuring an essay by Daniel Haxall, PhD.



The only Spanish-born member of the first generation of the New York School of Abstract Expressionism, Esteban Vicente was a master colorist. While rooted in the energetic mark-making of Abstract Expressionism, Vicente's canvases resist bombast or overt drama. He was interested in what he described as the "capacity of color to become light," and intentionally stripped away "fanciful" brushwork as a means of preserving a pure chromatic landscape, one where the artist's hand receded. The distinct luminosity of Vicente's canvases is a testament to the success of his pursuit.

The works on view span four decades of Vicente's career, from 1960 to 2000. This survey includes the traditional medium of oil painting alongside collages and mixed media pieces, which were integral components of his practice. In particular, collage brought a heightened physicality to his artistic investigations, grounding the ephemeral nature of color in a tactile, constructed surface. It also served as a means of resolving the interplay of form and hue.

Deeply influenced by his natural surrounds, Vicente's compositions pulse with a radiant sensibility that is less about depicting nature than distilling its essence: the furtive bloom of Spring, the fleeting moments of light before the world moves into evening, or the brooding quiet before a storm. In his canvases and collages, color is both subject and atmosphere, which he transforms into an emotive force that effortlessly stirs memory and sensation.

ESTEBAN VICENTE was born in Turégano, Spain in 1903. His father served in the Civil Guard, a police force in the Castile region and was an amateur painter who took the young Vicente with him on visits to the Prado Museum. In 1918, Vicente entered military school, but left after three months. At fifteen years old, Vicente began at the School of Fine Arts of the Real Academia de San Fernando in Madrid. As a young man living in Madrid, Barcelona, and Paris, he developed friendships with artists and writers. In 1928, he had his first exhibition with Juan Bonafé at the Ateneo de Madrid.

Vicente left Europe for New York City in 1936. The United States became the artist's permanent home. His contemporaries and associates included Willem de Kooning (their 10th Street studios were on a shared floor), Elaine de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Franz Kline, Barnett Newman, and Ad Reinhardt.

Vicente spent a good portion of his career teaching. He was among the faculty at Black Mountain College, Black Mountain, NC; the New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture, New York, NY; and the University of California, Berkeley, CA, among other institutions.

His work may be found in important collections and museums such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY, among others.

At the end of his life, the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Esteban Vicente, a museum in his honor, was opened in Segovia by the Spanish government. Vicente attended the museum's opening in 1998.

Vicente died at the age of 97 in 2001 in Bridgehampton, NY, ten days before his 98th birthday. He had a long and prosperous career, living and working with multiple generations of artists and painting well into his 90s.

Miles McEnery Gallery proudly represents the Esteban Vicente Foundation.

For press inquiries, please contact: press@milesmcenery.com

Image: Esteban Vicente, *Water Mill*, 1963, Oil on linen, 36 x 40 inches