

**Dana Powell**

*The Moon Is Still Free*

April 24 – May 30, 2025

Two bright lights look the viewer in the eye — headlights reflecting off tarmac, pooling pinkish light. A fraction of a car is visible; the rest of the landscape recedes into darkness. Titled *Rest Stop*, the painting depicts an everyday location, a typical highway roadside. The eerie, deserted, non-place is grained by the warp and weft of the linen canvas. Like a memory or a photo negative, the image is ephemeral and escaping.

Dana Powell's intimate paintings are curiously uninhabited, and yet they are littered with the traces of human life. Highways stretch into the twilight, utility lines peek over trees, headlights shine out of the dark, the landscape unfurling like a dream half-remembered. Rather than looking forward, towards the vanishing point of the iconic American road trip, Powell's gaze is pulled upwards to the moon. As she maps this geography of displacement, her eye finds wonder and respite in the natural world, capturing the tiny miracles of a sunset or the moon in a blue sky.

Powell's compositions resist straightforward perspectives, the horizon line slightly tilted or viewed from above or below. Like an iPhone snapshot capturing a moment, they feel immediate and personal. Tightly rendered in oil on linen, Powell's paintings are a paradox of nostalgia and apprehension, a moment caught in a tug of war between past and future. Each brushstroke is a quiet testament to the unsettling fragmentation of contemporary experience—and a whispered thank you to the sky and stars.

Born in 1989 in Milwaukee, WI, Dana Powell lives and works in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The artist graduated with a BFA from Cooper Union in 2015 and completed a residency at the Still House Group the following year.