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# A Window Onto America's Evolving Landscape

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Holton Rower. *Obscure God Makes Good*. 2016. Paint on plywood. 184 x 115 cm.

27  
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## Sophia Contemporary's group exhibition *Shifting Landscapes* uses abstraction to address the contemporary USA



Six artists, Afruz Amighi, Iva Gueorguieva, Herman Mejia, Amir Niravan, Holton Rower and Hannah Whitaker, will display their takes on abstract painting, photography and sculpture at **Sophia Contemporary** in London, exploring contemporary American culture from their international perspectives.

Spanning generations, *Shifting Landscapes* promises a window onto the USA at present from their Iranian, Bulgarian or even Venezuelan, lenses. Tackling complex issues such as contemporaneity, materiality and historic legacy in a post-modern world that is struggling with socio-political division and isolation, each artist serves as proof of not only the diversity of the vast term "abstraction", but the umbrella term of "American" as well.

Iranian artist Amighi will present abstract sculptures referencing different architectural movements to address the common aesthetic ideals of building and creating personalised spaces, Gueorguieva, from Bulgaria, shows paintings and sculptures inspired by Abstract Expressionism, and Mejia exhibits gestural paintings depicting daily life, recalling both the landscape of his home country of Venezuela and the bustling cityscape of his adopted home New York.

The other three artists are American-born: Nikravan, whose Modernist-inspired trompe l'oeil works create photorealistic images of textured surfaces in 3D form; Rower, who carves into thickly layered paint to suggest geological strata and an obsession with excess; and Whitaker, who blends figuration and abstraction to create photographs that read as both digital and painterly, challenging the limitations and structure of her medium.

As much a zeitgeist as an exploration into the (still largely untapped) potential of abstraction, each artist pushes the boundaries of their respective mediums in order to present manipulated realities that question the status quo and encourage viewers to reconsider not only what is considered "abstraction", but what it means to be an American in the USA today.

*Shifting Landscapes runs 27 April-23 June at Sophia Contemporary Gallery, London, UK. For more information visit [sophiacontemporary.com](http://sophiacontemporary.com)*