

SUMMER BREAKS:
ARTISTS RETHINK TRADITIONAL PAINTING

JULY 13 - AUGUST 18, 2017

OPENING RECEPTION:

Thursday, July 13, 2017 6-8PM



Wayne White, *APE SHIT*, 2017
Acrylic on vintage offset lithograph
21 x 26 inches

Opening July 13, Joshua Liner Gallery presents *Summer Breaks*, a group show that rethinks traditional painting. Working from within the parameters of conventional, Western art history, the artists of *Summer Breaks* seek to break the boundaries of three main painting genres that have long dominated classic Western Art History and its museums. The artists of *Summer Breaks* redefine three time-honored painting mainstays: Portraiture, Landscapes, and Still-Lives. By operating from within these genres, the artists are able to question and build upon our own understandings of these conventional art practices. With contemporary subjects and new techniques, these artists stand upon the past, to work towards an expansion of their predecessors, rather than a replacement.

Whether the inspiration comes from royal patronage, family, or self-portraits, the genre of Portraiture carries a rich tradition through Western art, having left its mark showcasing innumerable painting techniques, and historical understandings. The artists in this category bend and break the traditional painting methods to create contemporary portraits with fresh approaches to painting.

Both Alfred Steiner and Michael Kagan work with traditional painting mediums (watercolor and oil paint, respectively), but manipulate the mediums to create something fresh. Using watercolor, Steiner's portraits of contemporary culture, appear first as collages of magazine cut-outs. With extraordinary realist skill, it is only upon close inspection, that we see that these figures are painted to appear as composite portraits of recognizable, pop cultural figures. Kagan creates portraits that are vibrant and energetic, created with small, seemingly frenzied strokes, that develop into powerful portraits of the power of man with extraordinary presence. Aaron Johnson carries forward this same vibrant expression and a sense of experimentation to his works on paper. For this show, he will exhibit four paintings on paper that begin with the process of blotting one paper against the other and end with him adding fine details to accent the accidental forms created from his initial process. To create his portraits, Parra reduces bodies to simple lines and geometric shapes creating anonymous feminine figures, whose sensuous outlines echo through his flowing lines.

Lastly here, both Libby Black and David Henry Nobody, contribute work that incorporates concepts inspired by celebrity and magazine culture. San Francisco artist Libby Black will contribute three works to the category of portraiture. Her paintings re-imagine the image of *Liza Minelli*, as well as high-end, brand advertisements, adding comment in their new authorship. David Henry Nobody, continues this conversation of contemporary beauty ideals in portraiture, finding his own inspiration through the magazine's hoards of advertising beauty models. The artist rethinks their final product, by inserting himself into their manipulations.

Sitting in between Portraiture and Landscape, stands Mathew Zefeldt's *After The Hunt*. As the artist explores patterns and repetition in his work, here he pushes and pulls the portrait of this hunter, as if resizing and resizing the same digital image. Recalling the sub-genre of Sport Painting, he carries us towards the tradition of the Landscape.

Artists Andrew Schoultz, Evan Hecox, Sam Friedman, Sebastian Wahl, and Wayne White, all use their practices to break the borders of the traditional Landscape. Andrew Schoultz creates imaginary landscapes with paint and collaged elements, bringing together symbols of power and history to comment on our own cultural climate. Wayne White too uses history to inform his work, painted directly on top of vintage lithographic Landscapes. His word paintings (*APE SHIT*, *FAKE*, and *SAD*) all combine with humor to create a critical lens through which we can view our own current political climate. Evan Hecox uses the memories of his travels, to create new reductive landscapes of otherworldly terrains, while Sam Friedman and Sebastian Wahl use their practice to create completely new worlds. Friedman combines flat, vibrant color, with abstract shapes that come together to create landscapes that vibrate and move, while Wahl's landscape collages create a full 3-D universe, meticulously built with layers of resin and collaged paper.

The third most recognized genre is the Still-Life. Providing the artist with potentially more freedom with composition than in Portraits or Landscapes. Historically this genre gained importance in the Western cannon with its concentration on aesthetic arrangement and allegorical symbols. For *Summer Breaks* Tony Curanaj pulls directly from the history of this genre, however, for *Big News*, the artist reinvents the genre with a modern subject matter. To pay proper homage to the history of the Still-Life, Curanaj only paints from life. His near perfect renderings of objects (in this case, the firecracker), are painted without reliance on tracing or projection.

Hilary Pecis is another artist carrying forward the painting tradition, now with textural and expressive compositions. With *Modelo Still-Life* we see the artist composing a simple set of objects from her everyday life. Paul Wackers' painting, set among the boundless foliage, depicts a collector's objects on display, as if mounting several Still-Lifes simultaneously.

Both John Gordon Gauld and Matthew Hansel, create post-modern Still-Lifes that directly reference and expose the painting tradition at large. Using egg tempera paint as the medium, Gauld's composition combines classic Still-Life objects. With flowers and dead fish, Gauld points to the specific character of the genre, while also referencing sport painting and landscapes. In Matthew Hansel's *The Studio*, the artist paints areas of the canvas to appear as if it has been stripped away, or un-stretched, evoking visual confusion, while the Still-Life subjects are manipulated and stretched, forcing their appearance as digital compositions.

Contact

Please visit joshualinergallery.com, or contact Karyn Behnke at karyn@joshualinergallery.com.



Matthew Hansel, *The Studio*, 2017, Oil and flashe on linen, 48 x 38 inches



Libby Black, *Liza Minnelli*, 2014, Oil on wood, 12 x 9 inches

July/August Gallery Hours:
Monday - Friday
11 - 6 PM

Address
540 West 28th Street
New York, NY 10001

P (212) 244-7415
F (212) 244-7416

Email
info@joshualinergallery.com