

CHAPTER NY

For immediate release

Paul Heyer

Fall Picnic

October 15 – November 21, 2020

Chapter NY is pleased to present *Fall Picnic*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by Paul Heyer.

Paul Heyer's practice explores the limits of our consciousness and bodied experience. Grounded in painting, his work occupies an allegorical space that feels both futuristic and fairytale. He playfully reminds the viewer how little we know of this world and embraces a queer perspective to challenge traditional binaries. In our increasingly isolated, algorithm-driven world, Heyer questions how we choose to form meaningful relationship. His recent paintings acknowledge the transience of life and impart his subjects with the power to posit new ways of "being human."

For this exhibition, Heyer presents a new series of paintings loosely assembled around the idea of a picnic. Heyer reimagines this art historical trope—which has commonly depicted the bourgeoisie in moments of leisure—to uncover a mythic space of respite. Heyer revives his characteristic motifs, including skeletons, blue apples, and butterflies, within newly developed environments. Hand painted plaid backgrounds appear throughout the works for the first time, representing both a blanket and the infinite space of the modernist grid, weaving a geometry of visual pleasure.

In *Encounter by the Huge Tree* (2020), Heyer's familiar skeleton subject leans casually against a tree trunk, pausing to greet a passing butterfly. The butterfly's fleeting presence, in contrast to the ancient tree and ageless skeleton, reminds viewers of the hopeful potential for transformation and growth. Heyer's skeletons, filled with vitality and youthful wonder, defy our expectations and upend our perception of life and death. They act as ambassadors to a parallel universe wherein curiosity prevails and possibilities are endless.

Within this new body of work, Heyer introduces representations of himself in dialogue with his fictional characters. He joins the picnic to explore alternative, more expansive ways of being. His rendered physical presence, within the context of his dream-like world, encourages introspection about what it means to be alive.

Paul Heyer (b.1982) was born and currently lives and works in Chicago, IL. In 2009 he received his MFA in painting from Columbia University. He has had solo exhibitions at Chapter NY, New York (2020, 2016, 2014); Night Gallery (2019, 2016, 2013); Mickey, Chicago (2019); and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2018). His work has also been included in group exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2020, 2017); Perrotin (2019); Park View/Paul Soto, Los Angeles (2017); Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York (2016); Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago (2016); Rodeo Gallery, London (2015); Young Art, Los Angeles (2013); 356 Mission, Los Angeles (2015); and Rachel Uffner Gallery, New York (2012).