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Henni Aftan
September 17–November 1, 2020

Karma is pleased to present Henni Aftan's first American solo exhibition.

Henni Aftan's paintings open a dialogue between medium and image by reimagining the process of making pictures and, by extension, the process of observation. As Elizabeth Buhe writes, Aftan's work explores "art's capacity to plumb the limits of representation, to defer meaning, to probe the nonlinearity of time, to ask where images come from, and to express painting's facility to point beyond its own history and objecthood."

Precise and self-contained, Aftan's paintings portray snapshots and vignettes that capture the tension of overlooked moments. With cinematic framing her work draws beauty from the banal moments and meaningful pauses that occupy the everyday. If the viewer feels they have already seen her subjects, it is because in some ways they have: scissors ready to perform a haircut; hands fastening a seatbelt; an aspirin held between two fingers; feet in freshly cut grass.

Aftan's "Déjà-vu" series, which translates to "already seen", consists of subtly different before and after moments in the form of diptychs. Each diptych marks the elision of some event that has been omitted in order to create the experience of déjà-vu for viewers who encounter one after the other. This series epitomizes

Alftan's larger practice, which conflates personal memories with collective ones.

Alftan's pictures defamiliarize common visuals and introduce a stimulating, singular perspective. Art historical citations and elements of pop culture further entangle her work with a lengthy catalog of visual codes. Through texture and pattern, Alftan investigates the threshold where recognition transforms paint into image, and image into meaning. As the artist states,

These pictures are the consequence of my observations of the visible world and its representations. Small perceptions of the everyday will merge with reflections on looking, painting and image making: the motif of my works is equally painting itself, its history, the paint as a physical substance, the tableau as an object. Painting and picture often imitate each other. ... But my images are not new. I did not really invent them. It is as if they were already there.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a comprehensive, fully-illustrated catalogue, including newly commissioned essays by Elizabeth Buhe, Hermione Hoby, and Jeff Rian.



Henni Alftan

Non-Stop, 2020

Oil on canvas

44 7/8 × 57 1/2 inches; 114 × 146 cm

HA-20-011



Henni Alftan

The Curtain, 2020

Oil on canvas

51 1/4 × 63 3/4 inches; 130 × 162 cm

HA-20-001



Henni Alftan

Fur II, 2019

Oil on canvas

31 7/8 × 25 1/2 inches; 81 × 65

HA-19-021



Henni Alftan

Haircut (Déjà-vu), 2020

Oil on canvas; 2 parts

Each: 23 5/8 × 28 3/4 inches; 60 × 73 cm

HA-20-003



Henni Alftan

Blue Umbrella, 2020

Oil on canvas

51 1/4 × 63 3/4 inches; 130 × 162 cm

HA-20-016



Henni Alftan

Morning Sun, 2020

Oil on canvas

51 3/8 × 76 3/4 inches; 130 × 195 cm

HA-20-021



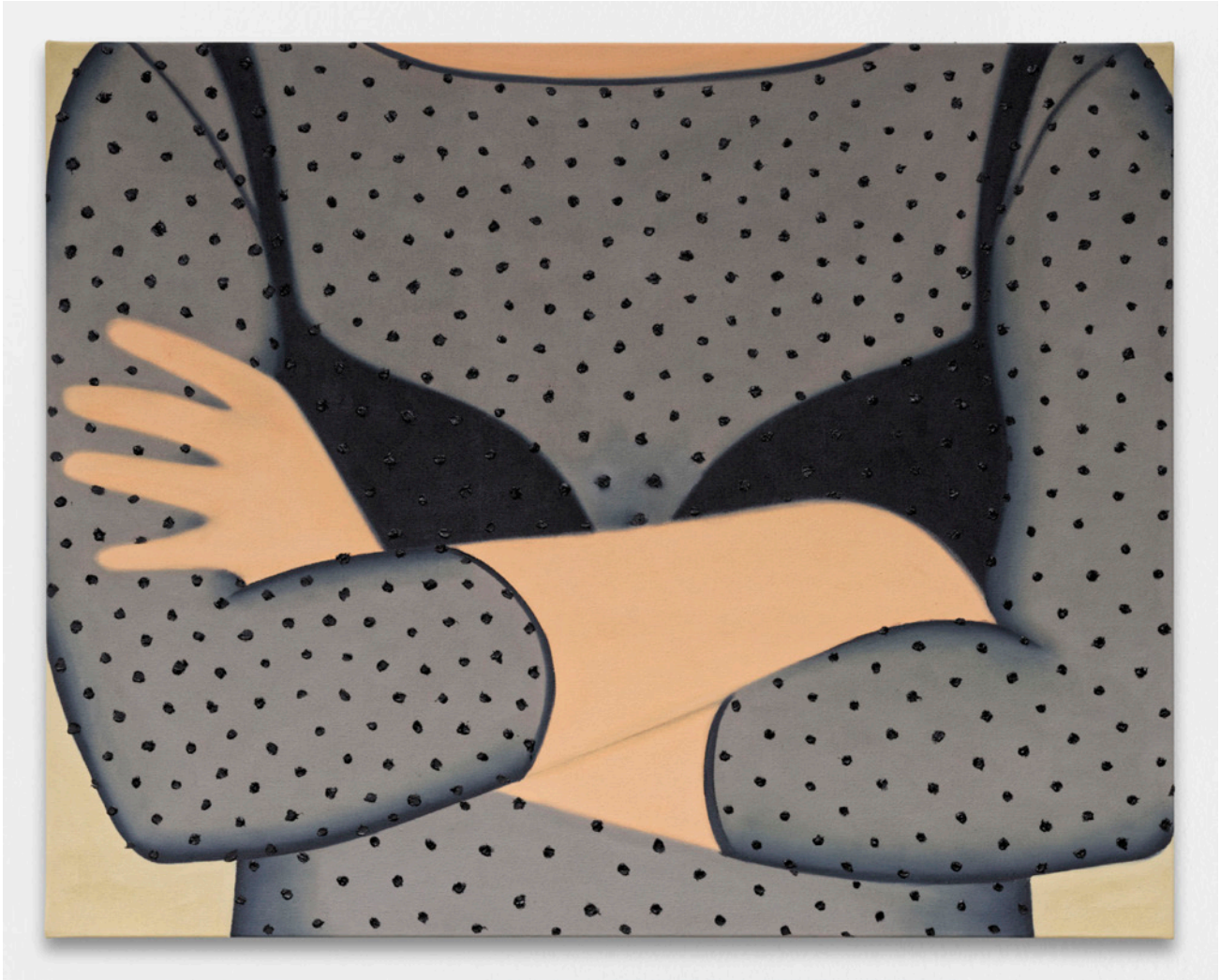
Henni Alftan

By the Pool, 2020

Oil on canvas

51 1/4 × 76 3/4 inches; 130 × 195 cm

HA-20-002



Henni Alftan

Body, 2020

Oil on canvas

28 3/4 × 36 1/4 inches; 73 × 92 cm

HA-20-013



Henni Alftan

The Jacket, 2020

Oil on canvas

28 3/4 × 36 1/4 inches; 73 × 92 cm

HA-20-012



Henni Alftan

Barefoot, 2020

Oil on canvas

28 3/4 × 36 1/4 inches; 73 × 92 cm

HA-20-020



Henni Alftan

Aspirin, 2020

Oil on canvas

18 1/8 × 21 5/8 inches; 46 × 55 cm

HA-20-010



Henni Alftan

English Garden, 2019

Oil on canvas

44 7/8 × 76 3/4 inches; 114 × 195 cm

HA-19-020



Henni Alftan

The Studio, 2020

Oil on canvas

51 1/4 x 76 3/4 inches; 130 x 195 cm

HA-20-022



Henni Alftan

Self-Portrait, 2019

Oil on canvas

21 1/4 × 25 1/2 inches; 54 × 65 cm

HA-19-023



Henni Alftan

Snow in the City II, 2020

Oil on canvas

51 1/4 x 76 3/4 inches; 130 x 195 cm

HA-20-005



Henni Alftan

Classroom, 2020

Oil on canvas

28 3/4 × 23 2/3 inches; 73 × 60 cm

HA-20-023



Henni Alftan

Hands Behind his Back, 2019

Oil on canvas

31 × 25 1/2 inches; 81 × 65 cm

HA-19-018



Henni Alftan

Translucent II, 2019

Oil on canvas

39 3/8 × 31 7/8 inches; 100 × 81 cm

HA-19-022