

MOTHER GALLERY

CAITLIN MACQUEEN

Ciao! Manhattan

September 23 through October 30, 2021

Opening reception Thursday, September 23, 6 - 8 pm

Mother is pleased to present *Ciao! Manhattan*, Caitlin MacQueen's first solo exhibition of paintings at the gallery, many featuring her recurring Agent character infiltrating a series of beguiling vistas. This exhibition will inaugurate Mother's Manhattan location on the 4th floor of 368 Broadway, New York, New York running from September 23rd to October 30th with an opening reception from 6 to 8 pm on the 23rd.

Much like John Peel's admiring quip about stalwart motorik post-punk band The Fall, MacQueen's Agent repeatedly strikes a repertoire of poses: 'always different, always the same'. She cuts a Siouxsie Sioux-like figure, slinking around impassively in smartly tailored clothes redolent of David Bowie's Berlin period. In *Discretion* (2019) she pauses to adjust a leather glove in front of a set of industrial metal doors then, in *Technician* (2020), pensively readjusts it while leaning on an archaic bank of supercomputer monitors. The sharp bend in her arm at the elbow echoes the angular definition of her features.

MacQueen reverse-engineers fandom with the Agent. Disparate attributes culled from snatches of film stills coalesce into an impressionistic new body: the perfect left-of-the-dial 70s or 80s pop icon one would want to be a fan of. Make your own band that could be your life, say.

In that the Agent embodies distilled desires, Tom of Finland's morphology of men is a comparable project, but she possesses a different, more subliminally sexual, aspirational quality. Her kind of aspiration is the sharp, deep breath just before a hypnotic yell in front of a transfixed audience. Buzzing and rattling surges of impasto coat and encircle the Agent like waves of reverb, vibrato and distortion made with brushes and paint knives. Humming ambient smokiness gives way to slashes of decisive, rhythmic line-work.

The title *Ciao! Manhattan* slyly refers to a 1972 film presenting a semi-fictional Warhol superstar in decline, played by the real—and really declining—superstar Edie Sedgewick, posthumously edited together from incomplete scripts. Here, too, the phrase signals transition for a star, but certainly not Sedgewick's fade to black. New

canvases shed characteristically cool palettes to feature an explosively red-clad figure in *Revenge* (2021)—is this the Agent experimenting with a vibrant new look? A bat in flight neatly framed in the center of *Dusk* (2020) suggests she was vampiric all along. Elsewhere, in *Clipping* (2020), a simple vase containing a single flower conveys a tranquility new to her world of intrigue, leaving intact the vibrating sonic texture of MacQueen's diligently worked surfaces. They continue to ripple and scrape even without her icon in their midst.

As she gazes out from the moonlit deck of a ship in the exhibition's luminous centerpiece *Signal* (2020), perhaps aspects of the Agent are receding over the horizon. Perhaps she is merely lost in thought, vacillating over which new persona to try on for tonight's performance.

-Joshua Caleb Weibley, August 2021

Caitlin MacQueen (b. 1982 New Jersey) makes paintings, drawings and sculptures. MacQueen's work starts with hazy screen grabs, but while painting she makes crucial changes, recasting or removing figures, slowly building the painting until the right mood is calibrated. She forms textural, careworn surfaces, eschewing "fresh" paint for congealed, embedding the figures, spaces and colors.

MacQueen was granted an MFA from Rutgers, Mason Gross in 2015 and a BFA from Cooper Union in 2008. From 2009-2010 she facilitated the critique class *What Is A Metaphor?* at the Bruce High Quality University. She has been in many group shows, notably the 2015 "'Nuff Said" show, curated by Essye Klempner at Underdonk Gallery in Brooklyn. In 2016 she was listed as one of the Rema Hort Mann Foundation nominees for New York City. In 2018 MacQueen created a solo presentation for artist-run DAAB Space in Brooklyn, NY entitled *I'm an Agent* in which she triangulated drawing, painting and sculpture to portray the Agent infiltrating a plush apartment.

Shortly after leaving Brooklyn for the Hudson Valley, MacQueen took part in the 2019 group-show *Tools, Totems, Traps* at Mother Gallery in Beacon, and was later selected for the 2020 Mother Gallery Winter Residency. MacQueen participated in "The Hunch", a three person show at Mother Gallery in October 2020. Also in 2020, MacQueen's work was featured in Artsy.net's *10 Best Booths in the Dallas Artfair's Online Edition*. In 2021, MacQueen was selected as a finalist for publication in issue #23 of ArtMaze Mag, curated by Julie Curtiss. MacQueen has taught drawing and collage at Rutgers University, Mason Gross. She lives and works in Beacon, New York and mourns the death of David Bowie.