

About

For its second exhibition in 2017, The Middler is delighted to present “All The Things You Are”, an exhibition of new paintings by artist Sophy Naess. “All The Things You Are” presents a multitude of relationships to painting, as well as relationships to the conception of self.

To explore these multitudes Naess has created a suite of paintings in the ‘album’ format, hung in a grid, allowing contrary states of dis/connectedness to punctuate a lyrical group of images.

The title “All The Things You Are” is drawn from the Jazz standard, adapted here to convey Naess’s embrace of multiplicity. Naess’s practice shows little concern for the paternalistic lineage of art history, and instead approaches visual languages omnivorously.

The ‘album’ of 14 x 11 inch oil, acrylic and gouache paintings arise from a variety of surfaces ranging from handwoven cloth to canvas to silk,

and various papers mounted on canvas. The themes—or ‘things’—of Naess’s latest exploration were construed both as a self-portrait, and also as an attempt to address the question posed in the 1975 Viktor Pivovarov painting *How to Depict the Life of a Soul?* Naess started an ongoing list of depictions, which evolved into an outline of works that would comprise the show:

A Wrinkled Pink Lady™ Past Its Prime
A Surfer on the Stolen Silk Boxers of Peter Brant
A Magician's Assistant's Body Laid Out for The
Sawing Trick
An Angry Eye
A Butt Plug
‘Marked by Doubt’
A Space Heater
A Figure/Ground Vessel Gestalt Obscuring a
Vagina
A Colorful Embroidery of a Solitary Swan on a
Linen Napkin
A Sassy Dog of Indeterminate Age
An Outlet
A Bouquet that Says ‘Forget Me Not’

'Tending Towards Gray'
The Inflate / Deflate Switch of An Air Mattress
A Friend
A Lover
A Visibility Problem

The subjects playfully oscillate between what could be a description of the condition of painting and what could be a constitution of the self, the same elusive subject suggested in Hammerstein II's lyric:

*someday my happy arms will hold you / and
someday i'll know that moment divine / when all
the things you are / are mine*

Sophy Naess (b. 1982) is a New York-based artist currently working in New Haven, Connecticut, who has held recent exhibitions at 321 Gallery in Brooklyn, New York, and at The Range in Saguache, Colorado, both in 2016. A large scale weaving by Naess will be included in a group show titled "We The Watchers Are Also Bodies" which will run concurrently at Hercules Art

Studio Program from April 12 until May 11th.
sophynaess.com