

## Marenne Welten: Mirrows

30 Orchard St, Gallery 2 ▪ Apr 9 - May 12, 2022



Marenne Welten's first exhibition with the gallery, and her first in New York, charts a course of remarkable discovery. In earlier works, such as *Man* and *Uncle*, both 2014, Welten applies paint in dabs and swabs, allowing translucent marks to accumulate on the canvas and propose a kind of incidental amalgamation of volume and mass. *Man* peers out at us from a cluster of muddy brown clumps, his jowls defined by the paint that has accumulated at the edge of the brush. The solitary *Uncle* addresses the viewer from a state of gangly repose; his drab quarters are fashioned of the stuff of his torso, and his head is the same shape as a lampshade hovering over his right shoulder. In *Kitchen I*, 2013, a single bold brushstroke creates a cavernous interior, and dinner plates are made in a spate of economical swirls. This approach is seen again in *Woman*, 2018, yet here Welten makes room for the tactile pleasure of the oils. *Woman* first appears to be a sickly blue-white, her resigned visage trained on some unseen worldly matter; looking closer, her face is composed of a brilliant rainbow of colors that swirl and co-mingle unexpectedly. *Television* is thicker yet, as is *Chair*, 2019.

In 2019, Welten began to more fully explore the multidimensional properties of oils. She deepened her investigation of compacted family trauma, applying gobs of paint to the canvas and creating a host of spectral figures literally and figuratively hovering beyond the picture plane. Breezy titles and jaunty characters belie a complex process of reconstruction, and her quotidian scenes carry loss and melancholy. Works like *Pajamas*, 2020, and *Kitchen II*, 2021, show the full potential of this approach. Here she composes the scene in ghostly white layers, adding delicate smears of color to the surface. Interior space is defined by a kind of chunky impasto abutment, and simple flicks of the brush yield an impressive array of representational forms. *Mirrows*, 2020, shows a figure surrounded by reflective surfaces, a reference to a childhood superstition about the loss of limbs. A happy accident, the exhibition's title references both the connection between a window and a mirror, and the dark magical properties of these named surfaces, not unlike paintings in a child's mind, wall bound and potent, ready to claim a person from their midst. Welten has built up this dizzying array of pictures from a carefully refined process of de- and re- construction, eradicating the perfect picture in her quest to reconstruct her own history. We are left with the compelling record.

Marenne Welten was born in Valburg, Netherlands in 1959. She grew up in Ulvenhout, and attended secondary school in Breda where she later studied at Joost School of Art and Design. She currently lives and works in Middelburg, Netherlands. Solo exhibitions include *Marenne Welten*, De Vleeshal, Middelburg, Netherlands, *Expedition*, Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Germany, *Zeugnis*, Kunsthalle Lingen Germany, *No Man's Land*, Kunstverein GFJK, Baden-Baden, Germany, *It is Not All Right*, Museum De Pont, Tilburg, Netherlands, *niets anders*, Spaceburo, Antwerp, Belgium, *Play Yesterday*, Gallery Albada Jelgersma, Amsterdam, Netherlands, and *House of Men*, Stedelijk Museum Breda, Netherlands. Group exhibitions include Kunsthalle Barmen/Von Der Heydt Museum, Wuppertal, Germany, Kunstverein, KISS, Untergroningen, Germany, Bridget Donahue, New York, and Gallery Clint Roenisch, Toronto.