

Rinella Alfonso

*Protect the meat from the flies*

May 4 – June 4, 2022

Los Angeles

Park View / Paul Soto are proud to announce *Protect the meat from the flies*, a solo exhibition with the Curaçaoan artist Rinella Alfonso, her second with the gallery and her first exhibition in the United States at our Los Angeles location. The exhibition will open to the public on Wednesday, May 4 all day from 11am to 5pm, and will run until Saturday, June 4.

Rinella Alfonso's (b. 1995) subjects include ordinary objects that revolve around the body, which she paints from memory and from a visual archive built over many years. Growing up as part of the black diaspora in the Caribbean, Alfonso recalls coming across uncanny consumable effects, belongings, and stuff in her surroundings throughout childhood, which she now describes as fantastic accident appearing everywhere. It is this experience, of seeing what she describes as "automatic art" lovingly tended, or blended into nature's overgrowth after much neglect, that drives her practice. To her, this process of recollection of the minor is part of a larger exploration of memory, where painting brings a universal and queer vitality to her specific and personal visions, incidences, and feelings.

Throughout this process, Alfonso redefines what is paintable, and whose memories and bodies have importance as a subject. Alfonso works regularly with animation in her research, paring down her images and abstracting them into shape and line executed in quick, gestural brushstrokes. Glyph-like, an iconic status is bestowed paradoxically onto these trace subjects. Displaying a mastery of light, she uses sophisticated painterly means to bring her subjects to the fore, where what was viewed as marginal now radiates and vibrates with life. Marked by surprising juxtapositions, Alfonso's subjects effectively transmogrify through her own unique visual economy, which communicates new realities that speak in an imaginative and transformative language.

Alfonso's oil paintings for *Protect the meat from the flies* take seemingly mundane and typical subjects found within a black Caribbean, late colonial life and vivify them in her application and compositions, conjuring their lives as they form connections between people, and also their lives themselves as objects. Synthetic hair in *Arch of Edges* (2022) is shaped into the curls and shapes of Dutch inspired (and forced) architectural motifs lining the city center of Curaçao, her home country. For her it simultaneously reflects how black people elegantly shape their baby hairs into a beautiful hair look, which she forms on an abstract ground. In the titular work *Protect the meat from the flies* (2022), a perforated cover appears to protect a highlighted organ-like form from flies crawling along its perimeter, all radiating and flowing in a dark expanse.

Light and blurred marks in particular bestow a phantasm-like energy to used and reused objects, like knitted tablecloths, meat domes, plastic garden chairs, and entry gates. These objects are touched and retouched, moved, cast-off, and re-used by humans surrounding and trafficking in them on a daily basis, accumulating a residue that percolates from haptic touch to the mind. Reencountering this visual landscape on her latest visit to Curaçao, Alfonso's sensitivity to these things, this stuff, contains a hyper-potentiated quality, where they physically burst with significance from past and present. In her paintings they become spirit objects that orchestrate and intensify their lives as things, signifying emotional qualities beyond their literal forms.

Rinella Alfonso (born in 1995 in Curaçao) currently lives and works in Amsterdam. She received her painting degree from the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague, The Netherlands, and she completed the residency at De Ateliers in 2021. She is the recent winner of the prestigious Royal Award for Modern Painting in The

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Netherlands. Her works have been exhibited at La Maison de Rendez-Vous, Brussels; Park View / Paul Soto, Los Angeles; and Octagon, Milan, among other venues. She will have an upcoming solo show at Project Native Informant in London this July.

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