

Bradley Ertaskiran

Parallel Universe

July 28 to September 10, 2022

Bradley Ertaskiran is pleased to present *Parallel Universe*, an exhibition featuring the work of Shuvinai Ashoona, Dexter Barker-Glenn, Nicolas Grenier, Stephanie Temma Hier, Justin Liam O'Brien, Sophie Ruigrok, Catherine Telford Keogh, Joseph Tisiga, and Guimi You. Together, the exhibited artworks offer the viewer a glimpse into real and imagined planes of experience, ones that oscillate between consciousness, the digital sphere, and the anchored or goopy fabric of our three-dimensional world.

In some artworks, the inner workings of the artists' psyches leak out into the physical realm. Sophie Ruigrok's pastel drawings are rooted in psychoanalysis and the unconscious, in which contorted dreamlike figures perform varied states of ecstasy and anguish, in a gold palette similar to historic images of religious devotion. Justin Liam O'Brien's stylized portraits combine the nobleness of Ancient Greek piety with the flattened aesthetics of 3D modelling yet show figures with palpable interiority, their drawn-off gazes looking beyond the viewer into another realm.

Shuvinai Ashoona and Guimi You's works are laced with the tinge of memory, where time and place are unclear but deeply personal. Ashoona's drawings show vibrant, intimate scenes of community and daily life, in which foreground and background, people and landscape merge into flattened pictorial planes. You's paintings are colourful scenes of a town she once lived, depicted in soft, loose brushstrokes reminiscent of a hazy memory or an imagined place.

Other works play with the uncanny, offering a flipside to life as we know it. Stephanie Temma Hier's works include representational oil paintings encased in lustrous ceramic consumables in bizarre arrangements, a sort of silly, obscure tumble down the rabbit hole. Equal parts legend, fiction, and hallucinogenic trip, Joseph Tisiga's richly detailed watercolour works show imagined scenes of solitary, animal, and cult-like figures in unlikely environments. Catherine Telford Keogh's sculptures carry the language of both readymade sculptures and ASMR videos by combining marble and granite with synthetic detritus like Advil, soap, and beef jerky, a portal into the sticky underbelly of web and physical worlds alike.

Touching on the timely and increasing conflation of physical and digital boundaries, Nicolas Grenier and Dexter Barker-Glenn's works borrow the aesthetics of web culture and technology. Grenier's paintings, composed of a hypnotizing gradient and pixelated architectural forms, appear almost digitally made in their precision and overall aura or blue-light-like glow. Barker-Glenn translates the surface textures of 3D-modelled objects onto abstract paintings while borrowing subject matter from traditional vanitas (the apple, the skull, the fly)—objects and symbols intended to convey the transience of corporeal life.

Parallel Universe seeks to recognize the endless opportunities and tools used to augment, enhance or dissociate from reality, while acknowledging a deep and persistent desire to escape it, all the while reminding us that art has always offered alternative experiences, beyond the real and the known.

Exhibited artworks by Justin Liam O'Brien, Guimi You and Sophie Ruigrok courtesy of Monya Rowe Gallery, Make Room Los Angeles, and The Sunday Painter, respectively. Shuvinai Ashoona's work presented in collaboration with the Dorset Fine Arts/West Baffin Eskimo Co-Operative.

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Shuvinai Ashoona is a third-generation Inuk artist based in Kinngait, Nunavut. Her large-scale drawings are produced at Kinngait Studios, a community-run art-making cooperative established in 1959 as part of the West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative. Her work was recently exhibited at the 59th Venice Biennale, the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), the Institute of Contemporary Art (Miami), among others, and is featured in the collections of the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa) and the McMichael Canadian Art Collection (Vaughan).

Dexter Barker-Glenn is multidisciplinary artist based in Montreal and Toronto, whose work merges industrial and architectural elements with handmade, painterly production, showing objects which are caught between multiple, often contrasting functions. His work has been exhibited at The Plumb (Toronto), Projet Casa (Montreal), Cache Studio (Montreal), and the Albright-Knox Gallery (Buffalo).

Montreal-based painter Nicolas Grenier creates paintings and architectural installations that translate theoretical and philosophical concerns into the visual or the physical. Grenier's work has been presented at The Power Plant (Toronto), Luis de Jesus Los Angeles, and The Biennale de Montréal, among other institutions, and can be found in collections including the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, the Loto-Québec collection, and the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec.

Born in Toronto and based in Brooklyn, Stephanie Temma Hier creates meticulous representative oil paintings, many featuring decadent scenes of humans, flesh, and consumables, nestled within hand-built ceramic sculptures. Hier has presented solo exhibitions at Nino Mier Gallery (Los Angeles), Gallery Vacancy (Shanghai), Franz Kaka (Toronto), and David Dale (Glasgow), and has participated in group shows at The Power Plant (Toronto) and the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), among others.

Justin Liam O'Brien is a painter based in Brooklyn whose work communicates intricate and intimate queer moments. His figurative paintings, often featuring solitary figures or groups of entwined bodies, articulate the feelings of both alienation and closeness that accompany expressions of desire. O'Brien's recent solo exhibitions include Monya Rowe Gallery (New York), Richard Heller Gallery (Santa Monica), and GNYF Gallery (Berlin). His work has been featured in *New American Paintings* (2020), *Artforum* (2021), and *W Magazine* (2021), among other publications.

Sophie Ruigrok is an artist and writer based in London (UK) whose pastel works appropriate the aesthetics of religious iconography through both scale and colour palette to create euphoric, dreamlike scenes imbued with symbolism and personal history. Ruigrok's work has been featured in solo exhibitions at the Sunday Painter (London), South London Gallery, San Mei Gallery (London), with recent group exhibitions at Marlborough (London) and Droog (Amsterdam).

Born in Toronto, Catherine Telford Keogh is a multidisciplinary artist working primarily in sculpture who holds an MFA in Sculpture from the Yale School of Art and a Master of Arts in Religion in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies from Yale University. Selected exhibitions include Helena Anrather (New York), Seattle Art Museum (Washington) Bronx Museum (New York), and Roberta Palen (Toronto). Telford Keogh is an artist-in-residence at the Pelling Laboratory for Augmented Biology at the University of Ottawa where she is examining the bacterial metabolism of waste.

Joseph Tisiga is a multidisciplinary artist based in Montreal and a member of the Kaska Dena First Nation. His painted and assembled scenes are rich in detail and scope, showing stories of figures in fantastical settings nuanced with humour and obscurity. His work has been exhibited at notable institutions such as the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), MASS MoCA (North Adams), the Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, (Santa Fe), The Audain Art Museum (Whistler), Yukon Arts Center (Whitehorse) and was the subject of recent solo exhibitions at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum (East Lansing) and at the Musée d'art de Joliette.

Based in Seoul, Guimi You is a painter whose work is informed by her training in both traditional Korean portrait and landscape painting, in addition to drawing inspiration from intimate moments and emotions from her daily life. You's recent solo exhibitions include Make Room (Los Angeles) and Monya Rowe Gallery (New York). Her work is part of several institutional collections, including the Institute of Contemporary Art (Miami), the Columbus Museum of Art (Ohio), and the Yuz Foundation Museum (Shanghai).