

CATBOX CONTEMPORARY
Ridgewood, NY
www.catboxcontemporary.com
catboxcontemporary@gmail.com

New York Grief (the dance rats)

Erika Rios Hickle

October 26 – November 30, 2022

Text:

Erika Rios Hickle's, "New York Grief (the dance rats)", covers Catbox Contemporary in layers of gloomy nostalgia. Rios Hickle, who lived and later first visited New York in 1999 before living and working there from 2012 to 2020, grew with and experienced the city through major triumphs and traumas. Princess Demeny's song, "New York Grief", focuses on the similar sensations of dread and elation that surround personal tragedies and achievements. Throughout it all, fantastical aspirations bloom and swell, fueled by the chaotic and frenetic energy of a metropolis funneling itself through the bodies of those who inhabit it. For her installation, Rios Hickle employs an amalgam of iconic New York signs while also exploring the cities psychosexual predilections and their implications on the individual.

Rios Hickle clogs the opening to Catbox's main gallery space with a stretched obstruction, a pair of painted jeans, whose wrinkles and creases are frozen by layers of stiff silver paint. Peering outwardly from the gaping open zipper is a bright eye, which breaks contact only for the occasional self-conscious moment here and there. Zippers, button, and sewn seams become analogous genital forms. While you realize the meticulous styling of this Freudian assemblage, the unwavering gaze of the artist's eye brightly bobs back and forth from behind the synthetic light of the cracked lcd screen.

Rios Hickle recreates the "Cats" musical banner on a series of stitched together acrylic painted canvases, framed by bands of black velvet. The sprawling collage drapes over the entirety of the cat tree and spills its fabric tendrils across the floor. The tattered edges and strands of the work form arms which warp around and envelope the various limbs of the cat tree, exhibiting the fuzzy sentimentality of the familiar.

"New York Grief (the dance rats)" is as mournful as it is celebratory, a love letter to the myths and murmurs of what New York is and once was. Rios Hickle portrays the flawed and sometimes fickle romanticism of a city where Bickle and Plissken's shadows loom large.

BIO:

Erika Rios Hickle is an artist living and working Los Angeles, CA. She received her BFA from Cal. State Long Beach in 2008 and her MFA from Rutgers University in 2012. She has shown at American Medium, 321 Gallery, Geary, Kimberly Klark, Resort, darkzone, with recent showings at Fall River Museum of Contemporary Art and Bureau.

CHECKLIST:

