

**DEBORAH-JOYCE HOLMAN**

***LOVE LETTER***

**JUNE 10–JULY 22, 2023**





Deborah-Joyce Holman, *Love Letter*, 2023  
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Deborah-Joyce Holman, KT #7, 2023  
Oil and pencil on linen, walnut frame  
210 × 302.5 × 4.5 cm | 82 5/8 × 119 1/8 × 1 3/4 in; HOLM/P 15





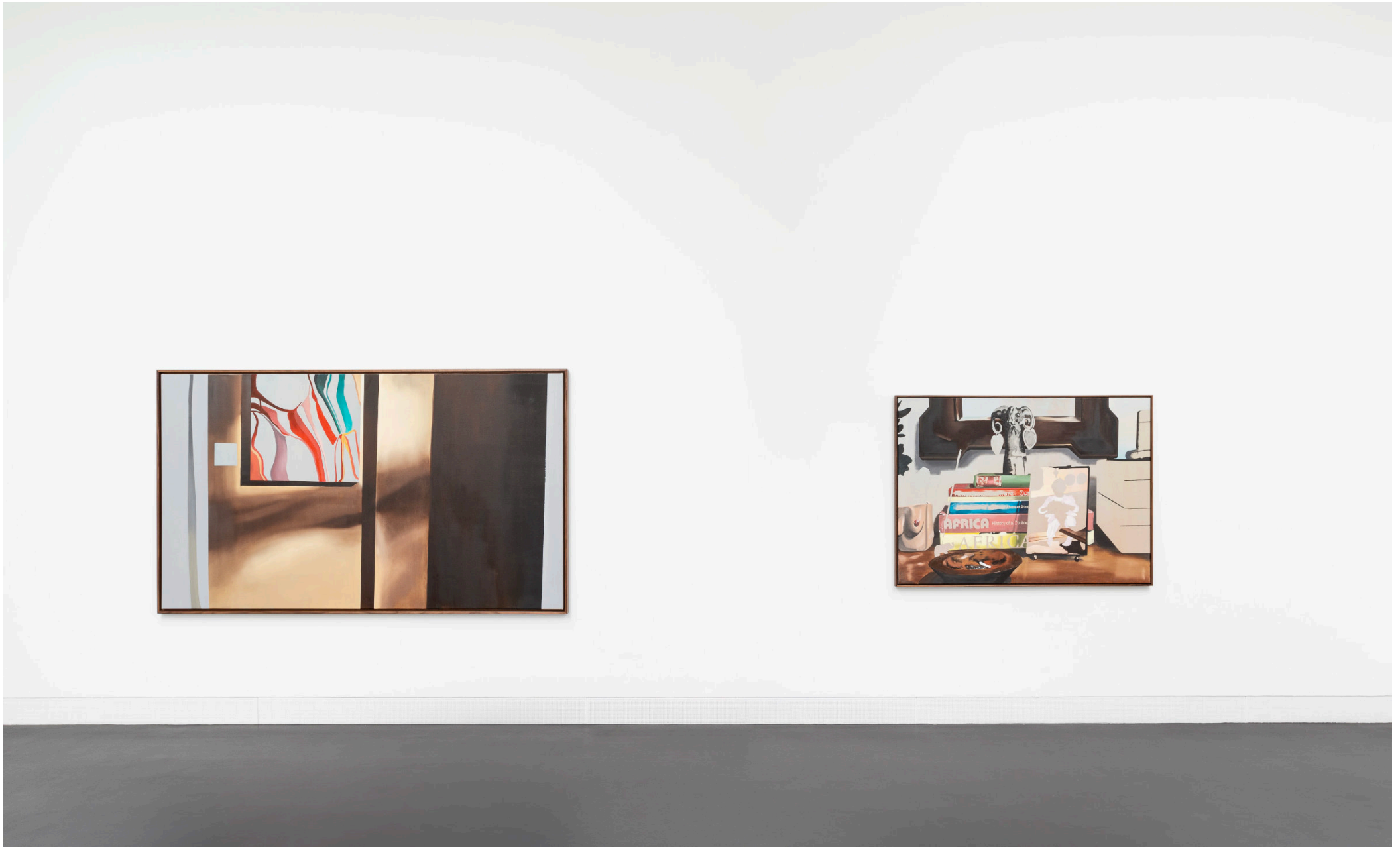
Deborah-Joyce Holman, *Love Letter*, 2023  
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Deborah-Joyce Holman, KT #5, 2023  
Oil and pencil on linen, walnut frame  
115 × 260 × 4.5 cm | 45 1/2 × 102 1/2 × 1 3/4 in; HOLM/P 14



Deborah-Joyce Holman, *Love Letter*, 2023  
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Deborah-Joyce Holman, KT #3, 2023  
Oil and pencil on linen, walnut frame  
145.5 × 245.5 × 4.5 cm | 57 1/4 × 96 5/8 × 1 3/4 in; HOLM/P 6





Deborah-Joyce Holman, KT #1, 2023  
Oil and pencil on linen, walnut frame  
113 × 153.5 × 4.5 cm | 44 1/2 × 60 3/8 × 1 3/4 in; HOLM/P 7





Deborah-Joyce Holman, *Love Letter*, 2023  
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Deborah-Joyce Holman, KT #6, 2023  
Oil and pencil on linen, walnut frame  
143 × 343.5 × 4.5 cm | 56 1/4 × 135 1/4 × 1 3/4 in; HOLM/P 11





Deborah-Joyce Holman, *Love Letter*, 2023  
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich



Deborah-Joyce Holman, KT #2, 2023  
Oil and pencil on linen, walnut frame  
115 × 260 × 4.5 cm | 45 1/4 × 102 3/8 × 1 3/4 in; HOLM/P 10



Deborah-Joyce Holman, *Love Letter*, 2023  
Exhibition view, Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich





Deborah-Joyce Holman, KT #4, 2023  
Oil and pencil on linen, walnut frame  
63 × 78.5 × 4.5 cm | 24 3/4 × 30 7/8 × 1 3/4 in; HOLM/P 8

# DEBORAH-JOYCE HOLMAN

*Love Letter*

June 10–July 22, 2023

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The practice of Deborah-Joyce Holman is concerned with the relationship between popular visual cultures and capital and the intertwined politics of representation. Holman contrasts the exploitative potential of how images are circulated with approaches of artistic and cinematic subversion, refusal, and resistance, using differing approaches across media such as video, sculpture and painting.

For the first exhibition with the gallery and with that the first comprehensive exhibition of their painting practice, Deborah-Joyce Holman expands on a body of work that originates in research of imagery from film and television series featuring Black lesbian characters. While other works of the artist, in particular in video, also focus on characters, they are entirely absent in the paintings. Holman purposely selects moments during cutaway shots or camera pans when the character disappears from view and we are left with visual information that may resonate with the absence of a body and provides contextual information on these characters' lived environments, or, at least, the set designer's imagination. Within this context it is also worth stressing that the artist does not see these paintings as discrete objects, but rather, by their nature and the context within which they are produced, as indexical. They originate from and refer to a larger context of (visual) culture.

In part the absence of bodies relates to a strategy of refusal, which we see within the paintings not only through the negation of depicting the characters that guide the artist's research, but also by leaving parts of the canvas more or less incomplete, more or less refined. At the same time, this refusal expands to the circulation of imagery within the context of visual culture and capital and the issues that arise with exploitation when representation and identity collide with capital. Within art, naturally, the primary locus for this collision lies within the commodification of painting, which quickly becomes problematic as the world of commerce has the tendency to repeat historical patterns of dominance, ownership, or power.

Throughout their practice, Holman repeatedly posits refusal as well as illegibility as counterstrategies for Black queer people in order to work against the logic of neoliberal society and its double-edged mechanisms of representation. Furthermore this examination of strategies of (refusing) representation probes notions of the real or authentic and how image production contributes to our understanding of society by addressing the perpetuation and disruption of stereotypes as established through visual culture and the limitations imposed by racial capitalism that re-position even subversive (figurative) work within this dynamic.

Deborah-Joyce Holman (b. 1991, Basel, Switzerland) holds a BA in Fine Art from the Haute École des Arts et de Design in Geneva. From 2019–20, Holman was enrolled in the independent study programme CAMPUS at Nottingham Contemporary. Recent solo shows include 'Spill I-III' Istituto Svizzero at Archivio Storico di Palermo (2022); 'Moment 2' held at schwarzescafé, Luma Westbau, Zurich (2022); 'Beautiful and tough as chestnut/stanchions against our nightmare of weakness' Sentiment, Zurich (2022). Holman's work has been on show at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2022); Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris (2022); The Shed, New York City (2021); 7th Athens Biennial (2021); Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva (2021); and La Quadriennale di Roma (2020). Holman has upcoming projects throughout the summer at Biennale für Freiburg (Germany), CFGNY @ Sculpture Center (NYC), and Simian, Copenhagen. In October, the artist will open a major solo exhibition at Kunsthalle Bern.