

## Marc Librizzi: Like Magic

30 Orchard St, Gallery 1 ▪ Oct 13 - Nov 12, 2023



Harkawik is pleased to announce *Like Magic*, our third solo exhibition with New York artist Marc Librizzi, and the first since he has turned his attention exclusively to painting. His is a world absent of people but heavy with their concerns, with the free-flowing and inevitable expenditure of consumable material, and with the possibility to halt momentarily the rapid pace of contemporary life for a fleeting and awe-filled glimpse at accidental beauty. Certain forms wend their way through scenes that are both bustling and quiet: the egg, a wholly unknowable given, structurally unfathomable and complete; systems of exchange and equilibrium set in motion; a sort of 90's flowchart lurker, faceless and nominally human; the fly in the ointment, occasionally a sidewalk plant, helicopter, dangling cable or loose bolt; the

iconography of communion and global harmony; improvisation; the kind of anticlimax one finds where hothouse flower meets actual sun.

Librizzi shows us projects half-completed, abandoned, awaiting intervention or entirely hypothetical, and nearly always illuminates them with the kind of incidental stage lighting found only in the suburbs. In solitary moments, a bug in the closet looks up as the door opens, a woodland creature scurries as an engine reluctantly turns over, or a teen, spraypaint in hand, freezes, waiting to see if helicopter blades are getting louder or quieter. Librizzi suggests we look closer at the things we think are only a means to an end, both front-loading them with more disquieting aesthetic pleasure than they can bear, and allowing more room for the possibility of redemption and symbology in the after. These paintings are brimming with impossible details too rich and elaborate to perceive comfortably, holding in a state of tense resignation ambitious composition and humble minutiae, and creating the pervasive sense that while all the vanishing details and competing perspectives resolve well enough, one gentle shift of the body's weight from heel to heel, one tiny tilt of the chin, might spell the end. The cracks between automobile panels aren't meant for scrutiny.

Gestural action is found everywhere: spooling, unclenching, rolling, knocking down, cracking, cutting, wrapping the shocked, bent, burnt, scratched and screwed. Patterned surfaces are always an opportunity for a painting-within-painting; splattered mud, the texture of a sponge and brushed metal of a scissor blade are too lovely to ignore. *Floorplan* shows us the technological advancements that enable the rapid production of low-cost housing rendered not in the glossy style of a crowdfunding pitch, but in toothpaste on marble laminate, perhaps by the hand of a sleepwalking architecture student. As usual something is amiss; there's not nearly enough toothpaste in a single tube for all this. *Spin Cycle* and *Along the Ride* are unimaginably dense, and here we see Librizzi at his most ambitious, loading the quotidian with pockets of magical realist escape in ways that defy language. The washing machine is a spacecraft. The driver of the other car is made of seats! In *Finder's Feast*, conditioned air circulates around the artist's own construction, offering an absent eater the opportunity to pluck fruit from its many terraces, an almost axonometric perspective introducing more queasiness to a bellyache in waiting. *Sticky but Not a Trap* redeems a spool of dollar store flypaper for a spontaneous exhibition of small works on paper. Two eyes and a barely perceptible smirk are visible in *Holding On*, transforming smog into an exuberant chemtrail freeloader.

What, precisely, is the difference between a tangled garden hose, shiny and stiff, still offgassing from the factory, and a tangled ball of dental floss? Between a lump of Nutella binding Wonder Bread and a lump of Liquid Nails, binding linoleum to hard wood? Between cat food, rocket fuel, and antidepressant medication? Between astroturf, pubic hair, and scotch-brite? Between grasping hands in friendship, offering an outstretched palm, holding together a communal construction? Does the big box wrench, used once, broken and discarded, offer a result appreciably different than the well-oiled hand-me-down, stored lovingly in a shiny red toolbox? Librizzi reminds us that all of the "stuff" of postmodernity is just like stuff, differentiated not in terms of its origin, or the conditions under which it is produced, but with a maddening array of superficial qualities. For all the bustle of his pictures, in the end Librizzi leaves us alone with this stuff, free to make it as magical or as ordinary as we choose.