

# youngfreaks

Kelsey Isaacs

Opening Reception April 9th, 2024

10.04.2024 - 25.05.2024

Clima presents *youngfreaks*, an exhibition of new paintings by the New York based artist Kelsey Isaacs, her first solo exhibition in Europe.

When it really comes down to it with images, perceptions of mood, tension, drama, and suspense are often results of calculated and manipulative strategies in lighting, perspective, palette and scale. Similarly, aesthetic evaluations of sheen, glamor, luxury and excess are subjects of context, proximity and signaling, an associative formula that could be reduced to: what's next to this, suggests *“\*\*this\*\*”*. In the economy of perception where things are used to make cents of the things around them, the exhibition's viewer can go broke; as true young freaks the paintings only really make sense (and meaning, for that matter) amongst themselves.

Derived from sets assembled inside the artist's studio in Manhattan, each painting is a snapshot of an isolated composition where objects are placed in precarious relation to one another, photographed, disassembled and then rearranged for use in other formations. As documents of moments that no longer exist, Isaacs's paintings are composites of multiple parts — tableaus designed (and meticulously staged) without actors that compel the viewer to focus on the two definitive subjects at hand: paint as a malleable vehicle for obfuscation and paintings as proverbial floppy disks, pseudo-archaic vessels for storing and relaying information.

Like its title, which is taken from (to most) a throw-away line in the beginning of a Carly Rae Jepsen song (*LA Hallucinations, EMOTION, 2015*) across *youngfreaks* minor adjustments are given major status. Alternating between point and shoot cameras from 2002 and 2018, Isaacs incorporates the varying resolutions in image quality, capturing these discrepancies in translation as formal truths and material information. By destabilizing priorities within each painting and populating rendered elements within zones of abstraction (and vice versa), the works of *youngfreaks* locate moments of clarity and recognition amidst displacement, motifs and layers of free association.

Cadavers of context, in the marketplace of *youngfreaks* — negligible and benign moments are scaled to cavernous proportions and sets are hyper imposed with handheld flashlights and tinted bulbs. Cabaret spotlight and soap operatic shadow announce one painting *darkhistoricXL*, whereas in others, caches of plastic gemstones and CD cases betray reflections of flash. Thanks to an older camera two low-res paintings (*youngfreak Medium* and *youngfreak Small*) are time stamped and for all works, titles are assigned referencing aspirational SKUs, filenames, moodboard signage etc. The end results are images forged by a series of translations: from idea to set, to camera, to photo, to painting, all laid across canvas as though for clinical examination.

In a world of images, and marketing, and posts, and screens, and lists like this, nothing feels anywhere by accident and sensations are coerced, if not heavily implied. Without visible actors, metaphor, sentiment or moral slant, *youngfreaks* is essentially an exhibition of scenes. Where tinsel and plastic studs incapacitate pictureplanes, girds, rainbow halos, shadows and severe cropping suggest a narrative hand, and shreds of plastic appear like remnants of ceremonial ribbon. Scenes, deliberate and aloof, that upon first glance, can be almost, as incomprehensible, as, complete, sentences, composed, almost,,, entirely, of commas.

Justin Chance