Maaike Schoorel Flooded Playground April 30 – May 25, 2024

Mendes Wood DM is delighted to announce the debut solo exhibition of Dutch artist Maaike Schoorel in New York. Titled *Flooded Playground*, the exhibition features a collection of new oil paintings. Painterly, bold, and symphonic yet delicate and wistful, Maaike Schoorel's paintings defy categorization. They reside outside the binary of abstract and figurative representation, referencing a wide swath of art history - from the rich tradition of Dutch and Flemish still-life and portrait painting to contemporary photography. Together, they pose questions about what defines "the artistic moment" and whether it remains a crucial concern in terms of "imagemaking."

Schoorel paints after capturing her subjects - whether they be people, places, or both - with her camera. However, Schoorel's methodology and the impulses behind her compositional choices add layers of complexity to her work that challenge our traditionally held views of what painting should look like and what it should be about. "I am not looking for the perfect romantic image to paint," Schoorel explains, "instead, I try to immortalize marginal, off-beat moments that connect me to the spiritual in everyday life."

Many of the titles of Schoorel's works exemplify this idea - *Pim at Breakfast, Family Portrait*, and *Toothbrushes*. The initial photographs from which each of these paintings was made are not formally set up — the elements contained are not arranged to create the kind of compositional harmony that we would traditionally expect to see in portraiture and still-life. Instead, they are off-center, cropped, unbalanced at times. They celebrate the mundane, the everyday, the way in which life happens un-staged all around us; they sublimate these moments into something timeless and eternal by way of oil paint. *Flooded Playground*, for instance, is an apt example: "The photograph I took was not of a happy playground full of children playing, but of a flooded and empty playground after a storm," Schoorel says.

Schoorel's unfastened and emotive style pushes this further, forcing the viewer to truly pause and visually engage with the canvas, to decipher the architectures and compositions that lie hidden behind the delicate layers of her minimal brushstrokes and the occasional incorporation of stencil, stickers, and gold leaf. In Schoorel's words "It's still-life, but life is not still. Our perceptions change, and so do our eyes."

On the occasion of the opening, the artist will be presenting a new publication, *Unsung Eve*, which documents Schoorel's exhibition at one of the oldest museums in the Netherlands, the Willet-Holthuysen House, with contributions from Zippora Elders, Dr. Rachel Esner, Diana Campbell, and Dr. Margriet Schavemakers.

Mendes Wood DM 47 Walker Street
New York, NY 10013 United States
+ 1 212 220 9943
Tuesday to Saturday, 10 am - 6 pm
www.mendeswooddm.com

Maaike Schoorel Flooded Playground April 30 – May 25, 2024

Maaike Schoorel (b. 1973, Santpoort, Netherlands) lives and works in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Some of the artist's solo exhibitions include: The Willet-Holthuysen, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2022); Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, Brazil (2021); Museum Dhondt Dhaenens, Deurle, Belgiums (2020); Gemeente Museum, The Hague, Netherlands (2017); Fondazione Memmo, Rome, Italy (2016); Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem, Netherlands (2012); and Museum de Hallen, Haarlem, Netherlands (2008).

In addition, her work was included in group exhibitions such as Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, Brazil (2023); The 7th Biennial of Painting - Inner Spaces, Deurle, Belgium (2020); Het HEM, Zaandam, Netherlands (2020); Mendes Wood DM, Brussels, Belgium (2020); Gropius Bau, Berlin, Germany (2019); Gemeente Museum, The Hague, Netherlands (2017); 20th Sydney Biennale, Sydney, Australia (2016); Kunstverein Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2015); Guangdong Times Museum, Guangzhou, China (2014); Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA, USA (2014); Manifesta Foundation & DutchCulture, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2014); Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles, CA, USA (2014); CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco, CA, USA (2011); Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham, UK (2010); Hayward Gallery, London, UK (2010); Glasgow Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow, UK (2010); Plymouth Arts Centre, Plymouth, UK (2010); and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2008).

Schoorel returned to Amsterdam in 2016, having spent many years living in London, New York, Rome and Berlin. She has undertaken residency programmes at the Van Wassenhove House, Deurle (2020); KNIR, Rome (2016), organized by The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Science; American Academy in Rome (2015 — 2016); and ISCP New York (2012).

Mendes Wood DM 47 Walker Street
New York, NY 10013 United States
+ 1 212 220 9943
Tuesday to Saturday, 10 am - 6 pm
www.mendeswooddm.com