

HANNAH HOFFMAN

Caitlin MacQueen, *Fascination*

September 14 - October 26, 2024

Opening Reception on Saturday, September 14 from 6-8pm

Hannah Hoffman is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new work by Caitlin MacQueen. These paintings and drawings delve further into MacQueen's devotion to pop esoterica: B-movies, New Wave music videos: reenactments of reenactments.

MacQueen has handled each of her reference images for years. In low resolution, on printer paper; creasing, spilling coffee, smudging ink and blurring the image. These references take form slowly, repeating motifs and characters with an almost performative endurance. Her selection draws attention to both the pervasive influence of cinematography on visual storytelling, and the specificity of her own imagination. Skeptical mimicry becomes a pathway towards pictorial reconstruction. By imagining the same scene scaled in toothsome paint or carefully framed graphite, MacQueen's work rewards a close inspection of continuity and variation. Is this the same lady in red? A different man in that car? Subtle articulations like the gesture of a hand, the color around the eyes, smudges next to the face, lend an atmosphere of perpetual mystery.

While MacQueen almost always focuses on persona, she rarely paints a portrait. Her figures display a studied attention to affect and costume, while faces are left gently enigmatic. Drawing on the historical tradition of Pierre Bonnard and other members of the Post-Impressionist Les Nabis painters, MacQueen uses oil paint's special ability to render form with graphic precision or mucky ambivalence. Abstract elements of her work are hidden in plain sight. MacQueen's nostalgic vocabulary eschews novelty, determined instead to see the present anew by uncovering the blueprints of our pop cultural consciousness. It's tempting to say that MacQueen's slowed down image-relationship is the opposite of internet media oversaturation, but it's actually an articulation of how, even now, we have no control over what moments stick with us. Beyond logic, we become attached to various punctuations of culture and style. MacQueen's studied reenactments touch on that capricious bond, wondering why we love the things we love.

Caitlin MacQueen (b. 1982, New Jersey) lives and works in Los Angeles. She received her BFA from Cooper Union and her MFA from Rutgers University.