

OVERDUIN & CO.

PRESS RELEASE

Nicholas Bierk
“The Beauty and the Horror”
September 21st – November 2nd, 2024
opening reception: Saturday, September 21st, 6-8 pm

Overduin & Co. is pleased to present “The Beauty and the Horror,” the gallery’s first solo exhibition by Nicholas Bierk.

The exhibition features a group of new paintings based on photographs taken by the artist. The quotidian moments illustrated in Bierk’s paintings capture scenes of sun and moonlight illuminating quiet interior spaces and ethereal landscapes. Bierk’s subjects point to historical painting, but the underlying language of the digital snapshot anchors the work in this moment.

Bierk’s intimately scaled paintings are imbued with a soft glow. Fleeting moments from clouds passing across the night sky, to shadows lingering on walls, to a flower cut at the height of bloom are distilled and recorded in delicate strokes. Bierk’s manner of rendering focuses attention on smaller moments within the composition rather than presenting an immediate overall clarity.

Bierk’s images dwell on passages of light revealing the materiality of a form—rays of sunlight running through cut glass, the glow of a streetlamp articulating the transparent folds of a curtain, lamplight on ripples of cloth strewn across an unmade bed. Certain works possess a cinematic quality, alluding to a figure just outside of the frame. When present, the figure is at rest and imbedded within the space, as in one picture of a dark but luminous interior which, upon second glance, reveals a figure in the background lying turned away from the viewer.

At times Bierk peels back the veil of representation to uncover the mechanics of his constructions. In a work depicting the radiating glow of light from a candle’s flame, a faint grid is revealed, plotted to translate the photographic image to paint on canvas. Another picture illustrates a view of a truck traveling down a dark road. The inky palette and softly painted image give the impression of analogue film. In contrast, the taillights of the truck and the car it follows are indicated by bright but minute daubs of vibrant orange and red paint. These deposits of intense color cause the photographic read of the image to dissolve and foreground the pure materiality of the paint.

Throughout Bierk’s work, the focus oscillates between image and facture. The paintings engage the mechanisms and subjectivity of perception in their seemingly straightforward depiction of everyday objects and spaces. Within each picture a balance is struck between the emotional aspect of the subject and an objective treatment of its representation. In Bierk’s practice, the push and pull between these modes is central to the work.

Nicholas Bierk (b. 1985, Ontario, Canada) lives and works in Victoria, Canada. Bierk studied painting at the Rhode Island School of Design. Bierk’s work has been included in exhibitions at Barbara Gladstone Gallery in New York, Francis Irv in New York, and Fortnight Institute in New York. Selected solo exhibitions include *The Silver Cord* at Painters Painting Paintings, *Midnight* at Pangée in Montreal, *A Distant Light* at Patel Brown Gallery in Toronto, and *Pair A Dice* at Cassandra Cassandra in Toronto.

For more information and images, please contact the gallery at office@overduinandco.com. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 5pm or by appointment.