

CHRIS SHARP

David Gilbert

I Capture the Castle

October 11 - November 15, 2025

Chris Sharp Gallery is pleased to present *I Capture the Castle*, David Gilbert's second solo show with the gallery.

For the last two years, David Gilbert's practice has focused on a sustained investigation of private fantasy and queer space with the symbol of a castle at its center.

Castles can suggest the fairy tales, princesses and kings, but a castle can also be a site of violence and power which claims and holds onto land. There is the pomp of lavish feasts, coded gestures, elaborate ceremonies, but also strict protocol, oppression, and violence against invaders. Gilbert is drawn to this intense duality: the tension between a sanctuary and a prison, between a heaven and a hell. Who is kept in? Who is kept out? What is protected, and what is hidden behind the castle walls?

He began crafting castles out of paper, transforming these ponderous stone symbols into something light, fragile, and airy. For one castle, made of tracing paper, the artist cut all the bricks out, leaving only the "mortar" as a delicate net. These pieces often collapse under their own fragility, peeling from the walls, folding in on themselves. That collapse feels symbolic: it reflects the instability of the very ideals castles stand for. Their impermanence mirrors both a hoped for end of empire and the inevitable, melancholic fading of youthful fantasy.

Most recently, he's introduced a drawing of a hairy chest into the work. These compositions juxtapose the delicate castle forms with an aging male body. The once-sturdy castle, now collapsing and translucent, echoes the human body as it droops and sags. The dreamy fairy tale collides with something more raw, corporeal, and intimate. This contrast extends the space of queerness in the work—a tension between masculine and feminine, mythic and erotic, external armor and internal truth. For Gilbert, the castle came to represent power, constraint, transformation, and also became a physical manifestation of interior mental space: the walls we put up, psychologically speaking. The castle becomes a façade, a shell to crack open in order to reveal its queer, fleshy core.

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David Gilbert (b. 1982, New York, NY) lives and works in Los Angeles. Recent solo exhibitions include Flutter, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, 2024; Fairy Tale, Rebecca Camacho Presents, San Francisco, 2024; Heaven and Earth, Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery, New York, 2023; My Heavens, Chris Sharp Gallery, Los Angeles, 2022; and The Great Outdoors, Gallery 12.26, Dallas, 2020. Recent group exhibitions include Possible Rainbow, Beauty Salon, Los Angeles, 2025; Made in My Bedroom, NOON Projects, Los Angeles, 2024; Return of Histoire Naturelle, Chez Max et Dorothea, Los Angeles, 2024; Transmissions: Selections from the Marciano Collection, Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles, 2024; Purple Prose: Queer II Literalism & A Flowering Cacophony, Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, 2023; 10 artists / 10 years, Lighthouse Works, Fishers Island, 2022; 87 Franklin Inaugural, Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery, New York, 2022; and INSIDE.OUT UPSIDE.DOWN COSMIC.SPACE, Rebecca Camacho Presents, San Francisco, 2020.