

MARGARET CURTIS: 'S

MARCH 19 – MAY 17, 2026

Opening Reception: March 19, 6–9pm

Post Times is pleased to present 'S, an exhibition of new paintings and works on paper by Margaret Curtis. This marks Curtis's first solo presentation in New York since her 2003 exhibition at P·P·O·W.

Curtis's paintings depict sprawling landscapes populated by larger-than-life figures assembled from scraps of neon signs and plywood billboards. Familiar American tropes—a sheriff star, cowboy hats and boots, guns, the striped legs of Uncle Sam, oil pipes—appear as towering constructions dominating the landscape, pieced together and held aloft by rickety wood scaffolding. The images operate as facades, both literally and figuratively, revealing the fragile architecture upon which ideas of gender politics and national identity are constructed.

Across the paintings, the natural landscape often gives way to the checkerboard pattern of a Photoshop transparency grid, a digital blank slate that offers a subtle indictment of American expansion mythologies. If the nineteenth-century painters of the Hudson River School imagined the American landscape as a site of vast natural beauty and national promise, Curtis presents a far more unstable terrain—one cluttered with signage, scaffolding, and the collapsing symbols of American myth.

Several works stage figures in moments of instability or destruction. *Collapse* depicts the oversized head of a crying woman, her tears cascading in a waterfall that runs down from her eye and cuts into the ground below. In *Self Made Man*, a figure wearing Uncle Sam trousers and a neon outline of a cowboy boot tips backward in freefall, possibly slipping on an oil spill as the landscape warps beneath his weight. Nearby, a neon OPEN sign appears reversed, reading "NEPO." The facades finally collapse in the titular work, 'S, where Uncle Sam lies buried beneath a pile of rubble, a neon "S" poking out from the wreckage—a possessive stripped of its noun, leaving the question of ownership suspended.

Curtis laces her American landscapes with the residue of ecological collapse, found in the very paint itself. For more than thirty years Curtis has traversed the same trail in the mountains of northern New Mexico through El Porvenir Canyon (Spanish for "the future"). As she moves along the path, she sketches native flora and the centuries-old ponderosa pines that surround it. But after years of drought and infestations of pine bark beetles, El Porvenir was devastated by the Hermit's Peak Fire in 2022, the largest wildfire in New Mexico's history. Curtis collected ash from the burn site and incorporated it into the paintings on view.

Margaret Curtis (b. 1965, Hamilton, Bermuda) received her BA from Duke University and her BFA from the Atlanta College of Art. She also attended the Yale Norfolk Summer School of Art. Solo exhibitions include P·P·O·W, New York (1996, 1999, 2003), the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, and Tracey Morgan Gallery. Group exhibitions include the New Museum, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the Drawing Center, and the Andy Warhol Museum. Her work has been reviewed in *Artforum*, *The New York Times*, *Harper's*, *Art in America*, and *Modern Painters*. She is a recipient of the Joan Mitchell Foundation Fellowship. Curtis lives and works in Tryon, North Carolina, and Las Vegas, New Mexico.

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