

For Immediate Release:

Alissa McKendrick
Resentment
06 June – 26 July 2019
83 Grand Street

Team (gallery, inc.) is pleased to present a one-person exhibition by the New York-based artist Alissa McKendrick. Entitled "Resentment," the show will run from 06 June through 26 July 2019. The gallery is located at 83 Grand Street in New York, cross streets Wooster and Greene, on the ground floor.

Alissa McKendrick's paintings center around female protagonists and impish demons who navigate treacherous surroundings with apparent nonchalance. Her unsteady settings fade in and out of hazy grounds, often backed by glowing underpainting, that ascribe an overriding mood; treacly and humid or brisk and dissonant weather fronts that shudder between daydream and reality. McKendrick renders the rickety architectures and scratchy outdoor scenes that emerge from these atmospheres with spidery efficiency, locating interior and exterior within a psychologically charged internal space.

The format of the canvas and spatial relationships figure into the elements that contribute to a relational sum, one where the milieu of characters, props and sets are all loaded with symbolic weight and meaning. In one large painting, a goblin and an insouciant female character, nude but for her striped apron, rev twin fuschia dirtbikes through a field where a glaring driver speeds into a grisly yet slapstick crash; the bystander to this spectacle of peril and devil-may-care behavior is a mother cradling her child. Rife with symbols that crop up throughout the show — aprons, umbrellas, purses, and motorcycles — McKendrick insinuates tokens of labor, worry, and escapism that connect to overarching questions around femininity and control.

These narrative episodes seem to verge on autobiography, but McKendrick's craft lies in fiction, one blending a macabre Edwardian gothic unsentimentality with the unsettling whimsy of children's books. The darkly comic tension of the artist's fabrications is well represented by a painting of a stylish heroine who appears straight out of a Warhol fashion illustration, albeit one co-authored by Edward Steed: complicating matters is the drive-by intrusion of a leering urchin behind the wheel of a stiletto-mobile, depositing a trail of curliqueing exhaust through an environment bathed in a moss reminiscent of the wan stale light in Vuillard's "Green Interior." Playing associations with Alissa McKendrick's paintings inevitably yields unexpected and very pleasurable results - Elena Ferrante and Laura Owens; *Madame Bovary* and *Raising Arizona*; Chagall and Diane Keaton; Matisse and Buster Keaton.

The term "deadpan" might extend not only to the scenes that McKendrick depicts but also to the manner in which she has rendered them. A particular emotive energy is coupled with a

deliberate lack of affect; a disparity between the sometimes horrific events represented and the laconic reactions of the figures. Like a comedian with expert timing, McKendrick knows when to insert space and pauses. She is a poker-faced master of minimisation, downplaying the significance of Painting in much the same way that her painted muses detach from the car accidents and other mundane disasters that occur with great frequency.

To this end, McKendrick employs the spooky rather than scary, mischievous rather than evil, and cute rather than sublime, drawing on aesthetics associated with the childish, the domestic, and notions of femininity. In "Our Aesthetic Categories," Sianne Ngai writes that it is the canonically marginal but culturally ubiquitous categories such as the zany, interesting, and cute that speak most directly to the ways in which subjects work, communicate, and consume, the most basic dynamics and socially binding processes that underlie contemporary life and culture. Zaniness fittingly conveys the manic/comic action of McKendrick's tableaux and her focus on the experience of an agent confronted (and endangered) by too many things coming at her quickly and at once. As an aesthetic not just about play but about labor and precarity, the threat of injury is always hovering about it. McKendrick uses these categories, grounded in ambivalent or even explicitly contradictory feelings, to register underlying social value structures and conflicts of inequality. For the domestic and commodity-oriented aesthetic of cuteness, intermingled protectiveness, aggression, and disgust lay bare embedded dynamics of gender and power.

The conflicted nature and discomfiting judgements around these categories connects to the show's title, "Resentment." Resentment could be grouped amongst non-cathartic "ugly feelings" such as irritation or disappointment, what might be termed trivial emotions that are powerful precisely because of their bottled-up cathexis. The suspended agency of these emotive states — stewing, enduring, internalizing — submerges action in a morass of the emotions they combine or border on: anger, fear, envy, grief, and love. As such, we might understand the deadpan quality of McKendrick's paintings as reflecting a dry humor as well as representing the complexity and ambiguity of her characters' psyches and their negotiation of existential trials.

This is McKendrick's first solo exhibition with Team Gallery, having previously exhibited in two group shows here – "The Love Object" in 2017 and "Scenes of the American Landscape" in May of 2019.

The gallery is open from Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 6pm. For further information and/or photographs, please call 212 279 9219.