



I Don't Paint What I See
14 - 30 September 2023
Private View: 13 September, 6 - 8 PM

Berntson Bhattacharjee is delighted to present *I Don't Paint What I See*, a group show exploring memory through the practices of four graduate artists from 2023; Anastazie Anderson, Edmond Brooks-Beckman, Erick Alejandro Hernandez and Hettie Inniss. The title of this exhibition is taken from a quote by Edvard Munch (1863 - 1944), "I don't paint what I see, but what I saw", which poignantly describes the idea of revisiting memories on the canvas.

The theme of memory has been an integral and enduring element in painting since the Expressionist movement, serving as a powerful tool for artists to evoke emotions and nostalgia through their compositions. From the distorted and emotive canvases of Edvard Munch to the abstracted recollections of Wassily Kandinsky, memory's presence in art has continuously allowed painters to explore the depths of human experience. Themes of memory have continued to wield a profound influence over some of our most prolific artists from the last decades, exemplified by the provocative and renowned works of Peter Doig, Mike Kelley and Louise Bourgeois.

I Don't Paint What I See convenes a cohort of artists whose practices are steeped in the themes of memory, introspection, and a discerning examination of their individual legacies, offering a nuanced exploration of their personal histories.

Anderson's works for *I Don't Paint What I See* pull inspiration from photographs of her childhood home in the Czech Republic, creating a 'photo album' of nostalgic memories from her past. Through flatness, interpolations of colour, naivete and realism in flux, she ignites a sense of universal sentimentality in these works. Anderson paints on large-scale canvases to transfer photographs into grand, emotional, and lifelike scenes that engulf viewers in her whimsical memory-scapes.

In this body of work, Brooks-Beckman has employed a nuanced interplay of addition and subtraction, resulting in intricately crafted painted tapestries that yield a synthesis of visual, textual, and abstract elements. Within these compositions, he delves into the potential of formal components—namely, line, colour, and composition—as a means to explore and document his familial lineage and the entwined narratives of inherited memories. His creative process engenders allusions of a deeply personal, culturally resonant, and historically evocative nature, frequently stemming from his connection with his Jewish heritage.

Hernández's artworks depict a blend of elements drawn from his encounters with the Scottish landscape during his residency at Dumfries House, as well as elements inspired by historical images and fictional scenarios. *Incredulity #2*, for example, evokes similarities to Caravaggio's *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas*, as Hernández's central figure boldly places his fingers into the exposed stomach wound of his companion. In these works, Hernández blurs the lines between lived experiences, learned stories, and imaginative narratives, challenging our perceptions of memory and truth.

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Inniss' pieces exemplify her profound yearning for recollection and unceasing immersion in the realm of memory. Recently, she has journeyed a departure from capturing deliberate recollections and has embarked on an exploration of involuntary memory. The three pieces in this exhibition capture a singular memory, with each work conveying alternate perspectives, depicted by varying canvas dimensions. By exploring image size and frame, she further delves into her process of replaying memories, navigating perspectives of fact and absence.

About the artists

Anastazie Anderson (b. 1995) is a London based painter from Prague, Czech Republic. She completed a BA in Fine Art at Falmouth University (2018) and an MA in painting at the Royal College of Art (2023), with the support of the Bakala Foundation Scholarship. Recent group exhibitions include; RCA 2023 Graduate Show, Truman Brewery (2023); Well Cold, Moosey Gallery, Norwich (2022); /ru:t, Bermondsey Project Space, London (2022); WIP show, Soho Revue, London (2022); Kalendar, Spejchar, Unetice (2020).

Edmond Brooks-Beckman (b. 1987) is based in London. He received his BA in Fine Art Painting from Brighton University in 2009 and his MA in Fine Art Painting at The Royal College of Art in 2023. He won the Valerie Beston Artists' Trust Prize in 2023. Recent group exhibitions include; Duarte Sequeira, Porto (2023); Part 2, Alma Pearl, London (2023); Gallery Opening, Des Baines, London (2022); Take the day out in baskets, St Chads Project, London (2022); Breaking News, VO Curations, London (2022).

Erick Alejandro Hernandez (b. 1994) is an artist from Cuba living and working in New Haven, CT. He received his BFA in Painting from Rhode Island School of Design (2017) and his MFA in Painting and Printmaking from Yale University in 2023. Recent group and solo exhibitions include; a signal urgent but breaking, Perrotin, New York, NY (2023); Sueñx, The Mistake Room, Los Angeles, CA (2022), Excerpts from a Shared Horizon, Yossi Milo, New York, NY (2021), 40 Paintings, Harper's Books, East Hampton, NY (2021).

Hettie Inniss (b. 1999) is a London based artist. She received a BA Hons in Art and Design from the University of Leeds (2022) and received her MA in Painting at the Royal College of Art (2023). Recent group exhibitions include; Somewhere In Between, Hew Hood Gallery, Islington, London (2023); Fluidity, The Night Café, London (2023); RBA Rising Star, Royal Over-seas League, London (2023); Impressions, Subtitle Labs, London (2023); A Slash of Blue, The Gerald Moore Gallery, London (2023). She is a recipient of the ColArts Winsor Newton Bursary (2023), Royal College of Art, the RCA Frank Bowling Black Student Scholarship (2022) and the Berkofsky Art Award (2022), University of Leeds.

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