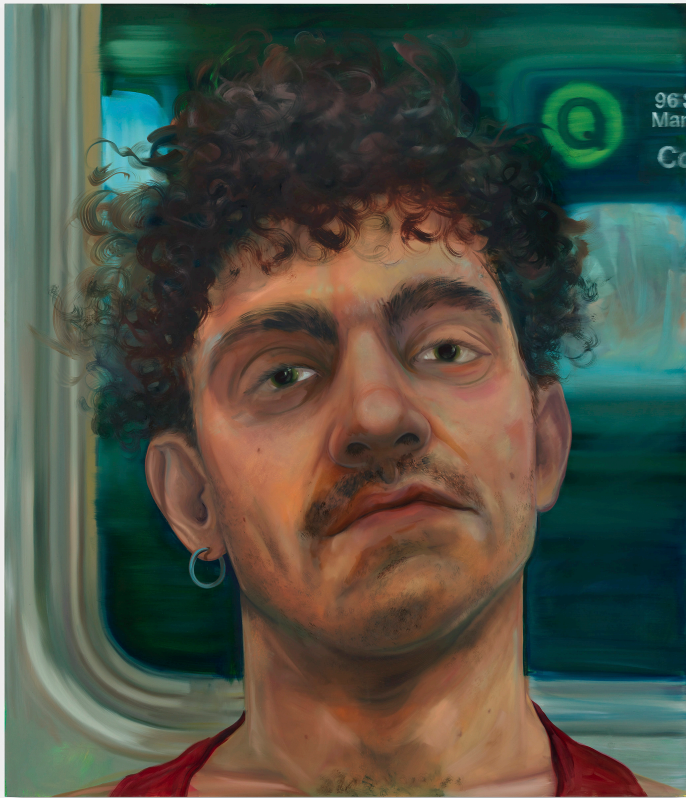


Morgan Presents



Rebecca Ness: Memories of Daydreams

October 24—December 14, 2024

Opening October 24th, 5—8pm

537 W 27th Street, New York, NY 10001

These paintings by Rebecca Ness are pictures of quotidian life. Together they present a portrait of our societal moment and document our time: an age that Ness understands as constituted by a menagerie of moments, a collection that unwaveringly recognizes the rich complexity of each individual's interior life.

The compositions lure us in by maintaining an approachable façade, a seemingly graspable narrative constituted by a dynamic and lush formal nature. Within this formal attention we can locate the essence of that artist's practice: Ness' works are about both the act of painting and the materiality of paint. The artist's playful and simultaneously intense utilization of light, perspective and the unwavering accentuation of oil paint's physicality, continues a historical inquiry into the constraints of the medium initiated by the artist's central precursors: Philip Guston, Norman Rockwell, and Lucian Freud.

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The everyday nature of the ostensible pictorial content masks the bubbling tensions beneath the surface. This collection of moments appears to showcase a world of normalcy that was promised unto us beyond the trials of a pandemic and other global challenges; instead of a singular utopian vision, however, this societal picture composed of individuals, highlights each figure's desire to belong. The subjects of Ness' paintings, whether enveloped in littered detritus, or isolated amongst the lapping waves, yearn to be seen.

This scrapbook of vignettes is notably devoid of a single authorial perspective, instead presenting what may be fragments of a narrative, or perhaps even moments of distraction from a larger obscured thesis. Human moments are depicted from an abstracted position of voyeurism. The paintings' subjects are aware of this voyeuristic viewer's eye, yet simultaneously somewhat apathetic to its surveillance. In her elevation of individuals' interiority and the rejection of some overarching, unchallengeable vantage, Ness asserts that not only is all history human, but it is our history, that we write with a pen in our hands through our everyday actions.

Ness identifies a radicality in her decision to document the everyday in a grander formal language more akin to history painting than documentary photorealism. Yet this choice of seemingly ordinary subject matter serves to turn our attention to the work of the brushstroke, the gesture and the weight of the paint itself.

Rebecca Ness (b. 1992, Salem, MA) received her MFA from the Yale School of Art and her BFA from Boston University. Major examples of the artist's work are held in the collections of Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven; Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden; Albertina Museum, Vienna, Austria; Long Museum, Shanghai, China; Kistefos Museum, Jevnaker, Norway; The High Museum of Art, Atlanta; The Speed Art Museum, Louisville; SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah; Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami; Orange County Museum of Art, Santa Ana; Zuzeum Art Centre, Rīga, Latvia; JP Morgan Chase Art Collection; K11 Art Foundation, Hong Kong. Paintings by the artist have also recently been included in exhibitions at the SCAD Museum of Art in Savannah, GA, and the Akron Art Museum in OH.

For press inquiries, please contact Alan Gutierrez at alan@morgan-presents.com

Image: Rebecca Ness, *Subway stranger*, 2024, Oil on linen, 70 x 60 inches (177.8 x 152.4 cm)