

Collide-O-Scopic/Conflate-O-Matic

New Works by Margaret Curtis

Known for her bold and provocative compositions, Margaret Curtis opens this new show that addresses issues surrounding a shattered social contract, looming dystopia, and creative resistance. **Collide-O-Scopic/Conflate-O-Matic** delivers a timely response to the devolving political climate increasingly characterized by shaming, shunning and schadenfreude.

There's a strange thing that happens when a person is engrossed in an activity he or she does well. Bodily needs like hunger disappear. The internal cacophony of self-critical voices that form the white noise of daily thought fall silent. Time becomes elastic. One hour can become as productive as six, while seeming to flash away in seconds. This is a flow state; a state of grace; a visitation by the muse; asylum.

Flow is facilitated by a phenomenon researchers call "reduced latent inhibition," a personality trait linked in its milder forms to creative thought and in its strongest form to schizophrenia. With reduced latent inhibition, stimuli our brains would normally filter out as irrelevant become fresh and meaningful. Perception is no longer cramped by past experience or judgment. Awareness sharpens.

When the opened mind enters a state of flow, the fast moving brain waves of waking consciousness slow dramatically to patterns more typical of REM sleep and the vivid, chaotic, hallucinatory states commonly experienced in the transitions between waking and sleep. In these hypnogogic states, we begin to see. We begin to create. The world becomes recombinatory.

In this body of work, I've tried to counter this period of cultural upheaval with creative flux, and as open a mind as possible. This is a survival strategy more than anything. Imagery is coming at us hard and heavy. Meaning is not stable. A singular artistic stance at such a moment seems counterproductive or maybe naïve. **Collide-O-Scopic: the singular refracts into the multiple. **Conflate-O-Matic**: the multiple collapses into the singular. The artists grabs onto what she can.**

About the Artist:

Born in 1965 in Hamilton, Bermuda, **Margaret Curtis** is a painter and visual artist. She has been creating feminist based work since the mid-1980's. Ms. Curtis' work was featured in Marcia Tucker's 1994 "Bad Girls" exhibition at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in NYC. Other shows include "Another Side of Modernism" at the Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art, NY, curated by Lilli Wei; "The Name of the Place," curated by Laurie Simmons; numerous solo and group shows at P.P.O.W. gallery in NYC where she was represented for many years.

Curtis has been included in shows at The Brooklyn Museum, The Andy Warhol Museum, The Huntington Beach Art Center, and The Wexner Center. In 2002, her work was the subject of a retrospective at the Amelie A. Wallace Gallery at Stony Brook University in NY. Recently she enjoyed a solo exhibition at The Hickory Museum in Hickory, NC, as well as solo exhibitions at The University of South Carolina, Columbia, and The Flood Gallery in Asheville, NC.

Critical reviews and features of Curtis' work have appeared in *Art Forum*, *The New York Times*, *Art in America*, *Art News*, *Art Issues*, *Modern Painters*, *Time Out*, *New Art Examiner*, *Interview*, *New York Magazine*, among others. Her work is in the permanent collections of The Fine Art Museum, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC, and The Tang Museum, Sarasota Springs, N.Y. She is the recipient of the Ellen Battell Stoeckel Fellowship, Yale Summer School of Art, Norfolk, CT, and The Predmore Award from Duke University, Durham, NC, where she graduated Magna Cum Laude. She taught painting at The School of Visual Arts, NY, for several years, and has been on the boards of both The Flood Gallery in Asheville, NC, and The Upstairs Gallery in Tryon, NC, where she currently resides.