Home Bound

QUENTIN JAMES MCCAFFREY, HEATHER MERCKLE, SOYEON SHIN, ERIN WRIGHT

Juried by Sara Maria Salamone of Mrs.

On View: July 31 – September 26, 2020

Trestle Gallery and Sara Maria Salamone of Mrs. are pleased to announce an exhibition of paintings by Quentin James McCaffrey, Heather Merckle, Soyeon Shin and Erin Wright. These artists were selected from a recent open call as part of Artist-Run 2020, a year-long exploration of artist-run projects throughout the country.

The definition for the word homebound provokes contrary emotions. The first interpretation is used to describe an action, i.e. on the way home; homeward-bound. When considering this interpretation, one can conjure feelings of safety, warmth, a coming together, an embrace from our loved ones. The second definition of homebound generally would refer to one as unable to leave their home due to illness or old age. During the COVID-19 pandemic, homebound has taken on a third and uneasy meaning, which lies between these two more classical definitions. Following the stay at home order, we have become homebound by requirement for the health of ourselves, our families and the safety of our communities. In this time, our lives have become surreal while our homes have become at once our safe haven, and our confinement. Time has found new nuance as days and weeks blend, our surroundings stagnant. “Home” has taken on an unfamiliar psychological and physical significance. This new definition is depicted in this exhibition of works.

Soyeon Shin invites us into her neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York, painting cityscapes, inspired by urban nature and the animals that inhabit it. Familiar, illustrative and flat, her brightly colored canvases depict the banality of the city, while quietly showing us another dimension of time. She constructs a world of brick buildings, empty lots and sidewalks. As if it were ordinary behavior, squirrels fly through the air, leaving chemtrails as they soar. Tightly painted dogs scale the sides of buildings while out for their afternoon walk. Trees are shadow worlds, where human figures transition between the real and imagined. These works present a surrealist version of the artist's mindspace, through which the viewer can see into another place, quite like and unlike their own.

Challenging the often sober visual code that exists in architecture, Erin Wright’s works scrutinize the surreal through materiality and composition. Rearranging architectural features and facades, she builds playful and clever mise-en-scènes that exist around the everyday landscape – staircases that lead to nowhere, façades that stand unattached to any structure – the works exist as a sort of paper architecture. Wright’s paintings mimic the machine-made quality of an architectural rendering through their isometric perspectives and applied textures.
Heather Merckle’s work, *Watch out for those hairy corners*, contemplates piles and portals, evoking the abject by combining human hair and acrylic paint on paper. Piles examine the buildup of something; from hair trapped in a corner of the floor to salt stockpiles, mountains, or a mound of dirt on the street. The accumulation of material takes up space, and from this space arise structures in the form of buildup. The artist sees these transient moments of substance as vessels of time. As much as she is interested in visible masses, Merckle is also curious as to what is hidden beneath them and how we navigate the spaces they inhabit.

Using a single-point perspective, layers of paint, and delicate treatment of light, Quentin James McCaffrey renders a cross-section of the private, the psychological, and the spiritual within realistic domestic spaces. In their use of simple geometry, his works reference Quattrocento Italian painting and 17th Century Dutch interiors in their symbolism, as well as their stoicism. The absence of figures in these typically inhabited spaces allows for an uncommon weight to exist. These interiors are a place for investigating the psyche and intimate relationships, comparing the domestic and the psychological and their mutual symbolism and influence.

Quentin James McCaffrey received a BA from Taylor University in Upland, IN, in 2009, and an MFA from The New York Academy of Art in 2011. McCaffrey participated in the 2011 Ippolita Residency in Carrara, Italy, and has exhibited at Flowers Gallery (NY), Sotheby’s (NY), The University of Maryland Eastern Shore (MD), and the Art Tank (NJ). McCaffrey lives and works in Blissville, NY.

Heather Merckle is a multidisciplinary artist based in Queens, NY. Her work merges art and science through an overlap of factual research and imaginative investigation into areas of particle physics, gravity, and the perception of time. Merckle holds a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and has exhibited nationally in New York, Chicago and Philadelphia, as well as internationally in Berlin, Reykjavik and London. Merckle has been featured in several publications including New American Paintings Issues 77 and 83, Studio Visit magazine, and MAAKE magazine Issue 6. Over the past two years, she has been an artist in residence with coGalleries and the Institut für Alles Mögliche, both in Berlin, Germany; Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, CA; Outpost Artist Resources, Queens, NY; SIM, Reykjavik, Iceland; and LUMEN, Atina, Italy.

Soyeon Shin is a visual artist originally from Seoul, South Korea. She has lived and worked in Brooklyn, NY, since 2010. She received her BFA at the Seoul National University, Seoul, Korea; and her MFA in Sculpture from Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY. Shin’s work has been exhibited at Alessandro Berni Gallery (New York, NY), Select Art Fair (New York, NY), Fountain Art Fair (New York, NY), New York Art Residency and Studios Foundation (Brooklyn, NY), and Gallery Giotta (Seoul, Korea). Her work has been featured in ArtMaze Magazine Issue 14 (2019), Internationale Kunst Heute 2015 (IKH-Publishing, 2015), The Artist Catalogue Volume 3 Issue 2, (2014), and The New Criterion’s The Other Fairs, by Brian P. Kelly (2014).

Erin Wright is a designer, painter and curator living in Los Angeles, California. She received her BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an M.Arch from The University of California, Los Angeles. Wright is currently an adjunct professor of Architecture at Woodbury University in Burbank, CA. She is also the co-founder of Binder Projects, a curatorial project based in Memphis, TN.