

HOLLIS TAGGART

Hollis Taggart Presents Rachel MacFarlane's First Solo Show in NYC

Coming Events Cast Their Light Before Them On View April 25 – May 25, 2024

April 3, 2024 – Hollis Taggart is pleased to present *Coming Events Cast Their Light Before Them*, the Queens-based artist Rachel MacFarlane's first solo show in New York City. Created over the past year and drawing from her experiences witnessing climate events in various places in the Americas, the works in the exhibition showcase MacFarlane's masterful ability to create fantastical worlds filtered through her memories of real places. Her eerie canvases capture landscapes on the precipice of change; scenes that she translates from reality to artwork through her distinctive process of maquette-building. Featuring twelve landscape paintings and three maquettes, *Coming Events Cast Their Light Before Them* will be on view at Hollis Taggart from April 25 through May 25, 2024, with an opening reception on Thursday, April 25th, from 5-8PM.

At its core, MacFarlane's work is about lamenting the loss of specific landscapes through creating and depicting new worlds where humans are no longer the protagonists. MacFarlane spends much of her time immersed in unique geographical environments – often ones that have been heavily impacted by climate change-related weather events. While working on her newest body of work, MacFarlane spent extensive time in places ranging from the Adirondacks to Wolfe's Neck Woods State Park in Maine, and from Prince Edward Island right after it had been hit by Hurricane Fiona to Clearwater, Manitoba during unprecedented flooding. As has always been her practice, MacFarlane does not document while she travels, instead preferring to absorb the atmosphere of a place and spend time really immersed in its sights and sounds. Upon returning to her studio, MacFarlane transforms her observations into three-dimensional maquettes created out of paper, paint, and plastic.

As MacFarlane describes it, a lot of play takes place at her collage table, as she manufactures new spaces based loosely on the spirit of specific ones, drawing on a myriad of influences from theatre and architecture to the world-building of science fiction literature and movies. The paintings in this show were specifically influenced by MacFarlane's research into the *Augsburg Book of Miracles*, a manuscript depicting celestial and weather phenomena made in Augsburg, Germany in the sixteenth century. MacFarlane was moved and inspired by how these anonymous illustrators centuries before her were also dedicated to tracking warning signs in the landscape and to recording them in creative ways.

While she describes the model-building as a distancing method, it is also one that creates intimacy, as the scale shift to a shallow box model leads to the creation of a miniature world we can literally hold in our hands versus the enormity of the environment. After MacFarlane distills the memory of a place into an object, she further transforms it into its final form on the canvas, using bold colors and thick brushwork that highlights the painterliness and artifice of her landscapes. As art critic Barry Schwabsky notes in the catalogue essay, these multiple translations and transformations allow MacFarlane to “operate with and against flatness and depth, illusion and physicality, naturalness and theatricality... Her work gives pleasure but also warns that with all these unavoidable antitheses, the choice of one pole or the other would be hopeless, and we have to learn to live with the tensions between them.”

MacFarlane was born in Scarborough, Ontario in 1986, and holds an M.F.A. from Rutgers University, B.F.A. from OCAD University, and Certificate of Advanced Visual Studies from OCADU Florence program. She has had solo exhibitions at the MacLaren Art Centre, Ontario; Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Toronto; Norberg Hall Gallery, Calgary; Mason Gross Gallery at Rutgers

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University, New Brunswick, New Jersey; Howard Park Institute, Toronto; and Anna Leonowens Gallery at NSCAD University, Halifax, Nova Scotia. She has participated in group exhibitions across New York City, San Francisco, Florence, Quebec City, Halifax, Calgary, Toronto, and Philadelphia. She lives and works in Queens, New York City.

About Hollis Taggart

Founded in 1979, Hollis Taggart presents significant works of American art, showcasing the trajectory of American art movements from the Hudson River School to American Modernism and the Post-War and Contemporary eras. Its program is characterized by a deep commitment to scholarship and bringing to the fore the work of under-recognized artists. The gallery has sponsored several catalogue raisonné projects, most recently for the American Surrealist artist Kay Sage, and has been instrumental in advancing knowledge of such artists as Alfred Maurer, Arthur B. Carles, and more recently, Theodoros Stamos, Marjorie Strider, and Michael (Corinne) West. In the summer of 2019, the gallery announced the formal expansion of its primary market business and focus on the presentation of contemporary work. It continues to expand its roster of contemporary artists, focusing on emerging and mid-career talents. With more than 40 years of experience, Hollis Taggart is widely recognized by collectors and curators for its leadership, expertise, and openness, on matters of art history, market trends and opportunities.

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