

NICELLE BEAUCHENE GALLERY

Quentin James McCaffrey

Hour of Light

June 8 – July 7, 2023

Opening reception Thursday, June 8, 6–8 PM

Nicelle Beauchene Gallery is pleased to present *Hour of Light*, a solo exhibition by New York-based artist Quentin James McCaffrey.

Quiet in scale and composition, Quentin James McCaffrey's carefully rendered, oil on canvas paintings depict imagined interiors. Held in these rooms, foyers, and halls are various arrangements of fresh bouquets and potted plants, tables and rugs, mirrors and oil paintings in gilt-frames. Set against floral wallpapers and hardwood or tiled floors, McCaffrey's objects mingle in beguiling *mise en scènes* that subtly infiltrate the psyche.

McCaffrey's representations of the domestic interior draw on a multitude of sources, ranging from seventeenth century Dutch interiors, quattrocento Italian painting, pastiched histories of the European decorative arts and the varied but timeless genre of still life. For the artist, the notion of the 'domestic interior' is multivalent; it is at once an architectural and social space, and in the realm of metaphor is inextricably bound to the body, mind, and spirit. Though McCaffrey's rooms contain the apparent matter of desires (the objects and decoration as reflections of taste), no subjects in the form of people ever appear.

Hour of Light marks McCaffrey's largest exhibition to date, comprising eighteen paintings through which the artist further deepens the capacity and complexity of his small-scale works. Here light and space are the primary players. The delicate, yet piercing geometry of sunbeams caught moving across the wall allude to windows somewhere out of frame, marking the slow, yet fleeting *traipse* of time. Mirrors, on the other hand, provide glimpses of what seemingly falls behind the viewer; in one painting, a wall with small paintings and a coffered ceiling reflect back, while in another, a doorway—red doors flung open—invites us beyond. These tools of *trompe l'oeil* generously expand the painted image beyond its surface, and question the ability and history of painting as a mechanism for representational truth. What's reflected in McCaffrey's paintings is without a doubt our own feelings, each room activated as a surreal container for the mind's most vulnerable and infinite desires.

Quentin James McCaffrey (b. 1987, New York, NY) lives and works in New York. He received a BA from Taylor University in Upland, IN (2009) and an MFA from the New York Academy of Art (2011). Solo and two-artist exhibitions include Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, New York (2022); Winter Street Gallery, Edgartown, MA (2022); Ochi Projects, Los Angeles (2022); and Hesse Flatow, New York (2020, 2021). Group exhibitions include Gowen Contemporary, Geneva (2023); Moskowitz Bayse, Los Angeles (2022); Marlborough, New York (2021); 1969, New York (2021); Winter Street Gallery, Edgartown (2021); and Trestle Gallery, New York (2021), among others. He attended The Macedonia Institute Residency in 2022 and is a two time recipient of the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant (2020, 2022).