

# CHAPTER NY

## For Immediate Release

### Cheyenne Julien

*Phantom Gates and Falling Homes*

September 2 – October 11, 2020



Chapter NY is excited to announce, *Phantom Gates and Falling Homes*, Cheyenne Julien's first solo exhibition with the gallery, featuring a selection of recent paintings and works on paper.

Through the lens of personal narrative, Julien's practice considers the systemic and cultural significance of our built environment. In both her paintings and drawings, she reconstructs the places and people closest to her, using memory as a perceptual tool. Julien's familiar subjects reveal how bodies can alter the environments that confine them and dictate our understanding of those spaces, uncovering the often-hidden physical conditions that enable racial perception. Throughout her work, Julien reimagines real life experiences, merging personal and collective

histories to address larger issues, such as environmental racism, displacement, and generational trauma.

For this exhibition, Julien combines portraits with interior views and outdoor scenes to present a multifaceted view of city life. The exhibition will also include still lifes of objects and places that carry traces of human presence. Influenced by Adrienne Brown's book, *The Black Skyscraper: Architecture and the Perception of Race* (2017), Julien considers the ways in which we perceive and experience race in a contemporary urban context. Brown writes that, "race is always shaped in some way by the built environment," and that, "understanding practices of racial perception in any time or place necessitates considering the built environment shaping its conditions and operations."<sup>1</sup> Julien's work—informed by her background navigating the spaces of New York City—reaffirms Brown's argument, carefully portraying her surroundings in a way that highlights the reciprocity of body and architecture.

In addition to Julien's characteristic interplay of figure and space, featured prominently in the exhibition are two frontal portraits that mark a development in the artist's practice. In *Trini Slangs*, Julien's poised subject flaunts her t-shirt which has been knotted to accentuate her tapered waist and curving hips. She holds her pose with confidence and ease. In a monumental portrait, Julien portrays her father asserting a powerful presence within the context of their family's home. Occupying the majority of the composition, he reclines leisurely while gazing down at his audience. These subjects are not caught mid action or in unassuming moments of vulnerability, but engage directly with their viewer, aware that they are being seen.

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<sup>1</sup> Adrienne Brown, *The Black Skyscraper* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 27.

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Cheyenne Julien (b. 1994, Bronx, NY) received her BFA in Painting at the Rhode Island School of Design in 2016. Recent solo and two-person exhibitions include, *Cheyenne Julien & Tau Lewis* at Chapter NY, New York (2018), and *Homegrown* at Smart Objects, Los Angeles (2017). Julien's work has also been included in group exhibitions at the American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York (2020); The Harvey Gantt Center, Charlotte, NC (2019); Mitchell-Innes and Nash, New York (2019); Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, PL (2019); Gavin Brown's Enterprise/Unclebrother, Hancock, NY (2018); Almine Rech Gallery, New York (2018); Karma, New York (2018); Loyal Gallery, Stockholm (2017); and White Cube Bermondsey, London (2017). Julien has also participated in artist residencies at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, RI (2018-2019); the OxBow School of Art in Saugatuck, MI (2016); and the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME. She was awarded the Bronx Recognizes Its Own (BRIO) grant from the Bronx Council on the Arts in 2017 and the Florence Leif Award from RISD in 2016. Julien's work will be included in *Drawing 2020* at Gladstone Gallery, New York in Fall 2020.

**For more information please contact: [info@chapter-ny.com](mailto:info@chapter-ny.com)**