

MAUREEN PALEY.

press release

CONDO 2019: MAUREEN PALEY hosting QUEER THOUGHTS



CHELSEA CULPRIT
Fear of Seduction

12 January – 24 February 2019
opening weekend: Saturday 12 and Sunday 13 January 11am – 6pm

Queer Thoughts presents *Fear of Seduction*, an exhibition of new work by Chelsea Culprit, at Maureen Paley, London. Culprit expands upon her exploration of the classed, gendered body into an elemental understanding of bodies mediated, colonised, disfigured and transformed by the flows of global capital, and in particular, its signs. In these works Culprit elides narrative, emphasising a formal deconstruction of the linguistic and visual codes that lend intelligibility and meaning to form, colour, and the body (the body itself a sign to be performed and transmitted).

Culprit's works study the colours that code contemporary life, along with the material histories, industrial processes and mechanical apparatuses that proliferate them. Colours organise allegiance and behaviour, and stand as metonyms for a vast web of designations and meanings for humans and their institutions. In relation to the Modernist view of the body and its labor as mechanically reproducible, the digitally transmittable body exists as an endless surface from which to accumulate code, and conversely, as an aggregation of codes to be understood socially.

In a series of muralist canvases, *High Spirited Chimeras With Hypnotic Digital Masks (III - V)*, the artist dislocates and reconfigures blocks of connotative colour throughout the fragmented and repeated form of a dancer in a show-stopping pose: head on the floor, hands gripping ankles, supine body in an arc towards sky. Contorted (and physiologically altered) by the repeated postures of its labour, the body becomes a living word-image, a cryptic hieroglyph. The fractal patterning of limbs and body parts activate the harmonic potential of the painting's surface, against which the static textuality of digital communications appear ineffectual.

In contrast to the linearity of the paintings, new shaped-canvas works operate like logograms (i.e. a single character that designates an entire phrase or idea; a symbol enacting its own power). The upholstered legs and pelvises of this form coalesce in imperfect tessellations, evoking blocks of a geometrically patterned quilt – an American aesthetic tradition that predates geometric abstract painting and is significant within the artist's familial history. Like a handmade quilt, which as a tactile social artifact allows itself to be consumed by life's processes, the hybrid bodies of these well-heeled femmes are composed of found and repurposed textiles and strung with the chains of bodily necessity. If they appear surrendered, it is only to the absolute exposure of being a thing itself, a self-engendered sigil of ones inherent freedom, and the liberating potential of a judgment day that can never come.

Chelsea Culprit lives and works in Mexico City. Recent solo exhibitions include DMing Purgatory at Queer Thoughts, New York, Right to Remain Elegant with Galería La Esperanza at Barba Azul, Mexico City and Fishnets at Uma Certa Falta de Coerencia in Porto, Portugal. Select group exhibitions include Dwelling Poetically: Mexico City, A Case Study at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne; Pintura Reactiva at Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, Mexico City; Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco; Foxy Production, New York; and Galerie Ophdal, Stavanger.

QUEER THOUGHTS 373 Broadway, New York, NY 10013 www.queerthoughts.com

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