

Karma

Nicolas Party

Pastel

September 24–November 5, 2017

Opening reception: Sunday, September 24, 6–8pm

Karma is pleased to present Nicolas Party's first exhibition with the gallery, comprised of works in soft pastel, installed in a unique environment conceived by the artist. Soft pastel is a fugitive medium: It can be applied or destroyed with a swipe of the finger—it is, after all, essentially colored dust. Party's works focus on four visual "characters": trees, fruit, humans and landscapes, each with its own identity, all of equal importance, and rarely commingled in the same composition.

Party has drawn upon a consistent graphic language for his characters partially rooted in his omnivorous appetite for art history. Inspiration for his bare trees comes from Milton Avery; his single-stroke ocean swells from Ferdinand Hodler are occasionally lit by Felix Vallotton's sunsets, and the eerie stares of his androgynous figures echo the apocalyptic vacancy of Christian Schad. Party uses the visuals he likes, treating them as building blocks to be employed, transformed, and integrated into his own pictorial and medium-specific language of concise forms.

These are non-narrative, non-Surrealist, non-Symbolist pictures. Shadows may fall in multiple and contradictory directions; identical fruits may flatten or fatten on a single plain; horizons may terminate with a hard line of color or a slow fade. Each painting is the sum of Party's active and improvisational approach: he builds, reduces, and scrapes at his surfaces until the composition achieves an organic whole. The optical effect of this physical activity is at once solid and fleeting. One has the worrisome sense that no matter how stable these complex and color-drenched arrangements of objects and things may appear, they could literally be blown away at any moment.

Nicolas Party (born 1980 in Lausanne, Switzerland) completed a BA in Fine Art at the Lausanne School of Art and an MA at The Glasgow School of Art, graduating in 2009. Party's solo exhibitions include, *Dinner for 24 Sheep*, Gallery Met, New York (2017), *Sunrise, Sunset*, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC (2017); *Nicolas Party in the Garden Room*, Palazzo Antinori, Florence (2016); *Hammer Projects: Nicolas Party*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2016); *Pathway*, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas (2016); *Cimaise*, CAN: Centre d'art Neuchâtel, Neuchâtel (2016); *Boys and Pastel*, Inverleith House, Edinburgh (2015). He lives and works in Brooklyn and Brussels.