

Rachel Klinghoffer *Aggressive Optimism*

February 3 – March 19, 2022



Dear Hope,

I know you are dim right now, your light seems unsteady, fizzling. Your soul hurts, you are burnt out. There is however light still there. That light has sustained you this far in these once-in-a-century times. You have borne witness to the awe of human loss during the pandemic, the awe of injustices come to light. With that darkness you have also been privileged to be in awe of human kindness and love. The innate urge for action for equality by what I know you pray will become the majority one day. This world is dark and divided but you can and will burn. This is your aggressive optimism reminding you, I'm here. I'm always here, I just need you to keep listening, looking, and finding those bright moments. They exist. They will continue to exist. In the moments filled with laughter with family and friends, quiet moments in the beauty of an empty landscape, a sunset, in the movement of your body, sound of music in your ears, I am here.

Yours,
Aggressive Optimism

The brightly colored paintings, impasto and buttery surfaces hum, vibrate from color within. Hope feels imbedded, as a default or an ambition. A presence is cut out, taking up space within the frame at some point within multiple circular openings. In many works, the negative space outweighs the positive, but still the brightly saturated colors overcome. The border, the frame, becomes the central figure or plane. The cutaway exposes the wall behind and the fuzzy, flocked innards or the painting's bones. With the choice of happiness over despair, yellows, oranges, and pinks exude from the thick surfaces of paint and found materials. The materials encased and adorning the surfaces are an amalgamation of ephemera, souvenirs, traditional and nontraditional materials and processes for making art, all spanning taste, gender and value. "Charmed to meet you", 2022, a larger-than-life sculptural self-portrait as a charm bracelet in the round, emphatically and brightly declares, "Hinani": I am here, while offering a physical prayer of protection and hope. Symbols span the lexicon of Dutch Still Life to religious iconography from the artist's faith to explicit signs of peace, love and resistance. Real and imitation materials hang adjacent to each other not knowing which one is which. The materials regenerate from themselves into something new, joyful, and exuding hope.

Rachel Klinghoffer is an artist who makes objects that are both paintings and sculptures. By repurposing materials, making and remaking them into paintings and sculptures, Klinghoffer prompts a reimagining of uses for these relic-like objects. Articles reflect the artist's personal connection to femininity, craft- making, Judaism, romance, pushing the definition of painting. Through time, the items become specimens, icons. They are poked, prodded, stained, sprayed, stroked, rubbed, dipped, then pulled, torn, cracked open and broken apart making up and becoming the new work. Rachel Klinghoffer has a MFA with Honors in Painting from Rhode Island School and a BFA in Painting with course work in Visual and Critical Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Select exhibitions and press include (solo show) One River School, Woodbury, NY; (solo show) The Skirt at Ortega y Gasset, Brooklyn, NY; Morgan Lehman, New York, NY; Kristen Lorello, New York, NY; BRIC, Brooklyn, NY. Klinghoffer's work had been included in New American Paintings and reviewed by Whitehot Magazine and The Brooklyn Rail.