



Installation View of Nel Aerts, *SQUIRM* (November 20 - December 18, 2021) Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, CA



NEL AERTS *SQUIRM*

November 20 - December 18, 2021

Nino Mier Gallery is pleased to present SQUIRM, our first solo exhibition with Belgian artist Nel Aerts. The exhibition features recent multimedia works that comprise an aesthetic that is as visceral as it is visual. Onanistic ouroboroses, punkish fabrics, deconstructed faces, and many a weathered surface line the walls of Aerts' first solo exhibition in the United States. Displayed in a salon-style hang, SQUIRM projects viewers into Aerts' oneiric world—one that is at once lonely and erotic; based in materialism and in fantasy; comprised of fixed objects and charged with the movement of oblique narrative. Forty-seven works will be on view in Los Angeles through December 18, 2021.

Aerts' practice is known for its simultaneous specificity of aesthetic vision and breadth of materials. After focusing on video and performance in the early 2010s, Aerts delved into a painting and collage practice that translates the sense of atmosphere and story offered by time-based media into the domain of static objects. She traded the camera for a panoply of materials and an interest in iterative representational motifs. For instance, in SQUIRM, towels, doormats, sheets, flannels, and scraps of lace—especially those that show signs of wear and age— all get a second life as the building blocks to Aerts' roughened, textured landscapes of the unconscious. To these surfaces, the artist takes knives, lasers, ink, pencil, acrylic, oil, spray paint, foam, plexi, varnish, and sandpaper, transforming them with gusto.

But while Aerts' primary medium shifted, her underlying representational concerns with identity, sexuality, faciality and masking endured. The human bodies represented in her video work are now substituted for tubular, feminized forms that often reduce the figure to essential, biomorphic parts: hands, genitals, eyes, and sometimes faces that resemble the profile views of Egyptian bas-relief. They uncannily appear and reappear throughout Aerts' works, primarily in bent postures that seem interchangeably humbled, reverent, and consumed in the act of masturbation. Though Aerts' figures morph with each work, they all belong to the same hermetic world. This world contains both the snake charmer (The Snake Charmer Eye, 2021; NA; 2021) and the self-devouring, charmed snake (Swallower, 2020-2021; Narcissist, 2021).

The sense of hermeticism displayed by Aerts' visual vocabulary transforms into an overall thematic of entrapment in SQUIRM. Figures are not only trapped in cycles of self-devourment, but also are trapped within the architectures of Aerts' abstracted compositions. Some are confined within sculptural forms that mirror their own bodies' reductive geometries. For instance, In Trapped (Silhouette Sign Lamp, 2021), a long-haired figure splays her limbs out on all sides of a sculpture's interior white void, as though she were a hamster caught spinning on a wheel. Elsewhere on the sculpture's imperfect grid, Aerts inserts Polaroids of herself posed with her paintings and collages. Frames within frames within frames – uncanny figures find themselves stuck within Aerts' compositions, caught in grids like prison cells and ovals like prenatal sacs. Mise-en-abyme is the new logic of Aerts' collapsed narrativity.

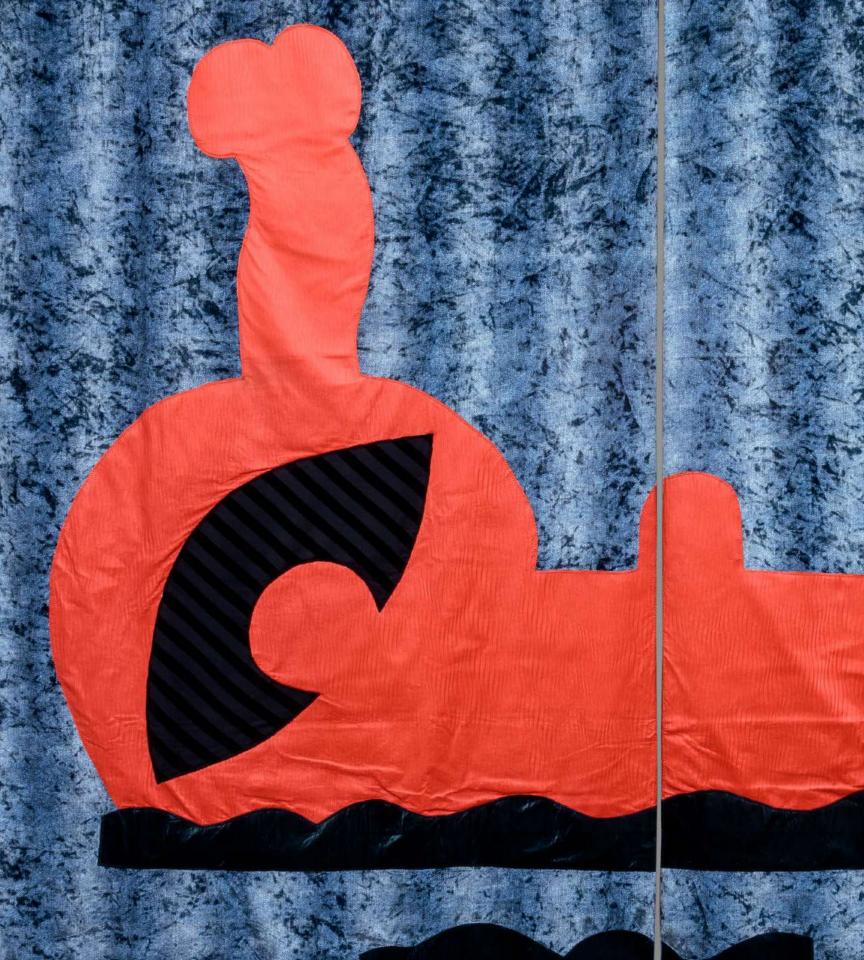
SQUIRM is titled after a type of movement elicited by confinement - one squirms when one is physically uncomfortable, emotionally ill-at-ease, or filled with restless, unchanneled energy. It is descriptive of many facets of the exhibition, from a viewer's experience within its dreamlike labyrinth to Aerts' frenetic artistic process. Aerts works intuitively and associationally, letting the somatic exchange with her materials be a

guiding force in her layered creations. Similar to the automatic writing practices of the Surrealists, Aerts trusts in the force of the unconscious to drive her world-building. The salon-style hang of the show, which enables a viewing experience marked by simultaneity rather than linearity, reflects what her studio might look like as she conceives of and constructs multiple works concurrently. It also creates a parallel experience of entrapment not only in the figures represented in her works, but also in the viewer, as the space is cordoned off from the gallery's foyer with two floor-length, hanging curtains that depict a supine figure with a single, open eye.

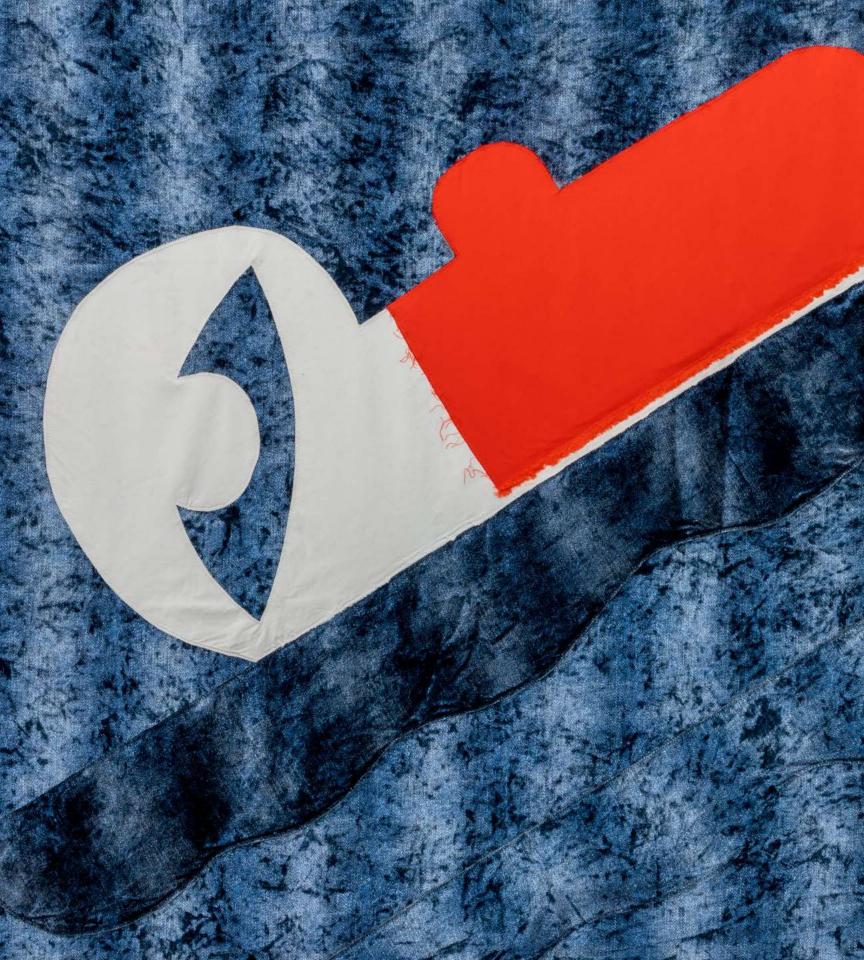
Nel Aerts (b. 1987, lives and works in Antwerp, BE) studied at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Ghent, Belgium from 2005-2009. She has had solo shows at museums and galleries worldwide, including Eleni Koroneou Gallery, Athens, GR; Carl Freedman Gallery, Margate, UK; Museum M, Leuven, BE; Kunsthalle Lingen, Lingen, DE; Westflischer Kunstverein, Münster, DE; De Warande, Turnhout, BE; Plus One Gallery, Antwerp, BE; Kunsthalle Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, DK; and Vincent van Gogh Huis Galerie, Zundert, NL, among many others.



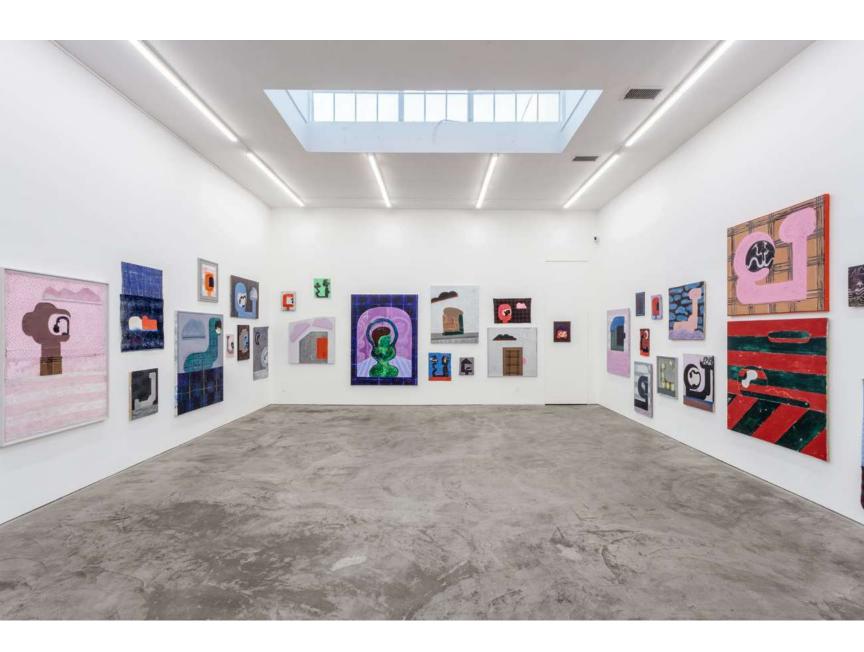
Untitled, 2021 Textile 94 x 47 in each 119.4 cm each 94 x 94 in total 238.8 x 238.8 cm total (NAE21.056)













Self-Love vs Self-Abuse (Silouhette Sign Lamp), 2021 Lamp with plexiglass, PU-foam, steel, wood, spray paint, glitter and acrylic 62 $1/4 \times 41$ $3/4 \times 11/2$ in $158 \times 106 \times 4$ cm (NAE21.048)

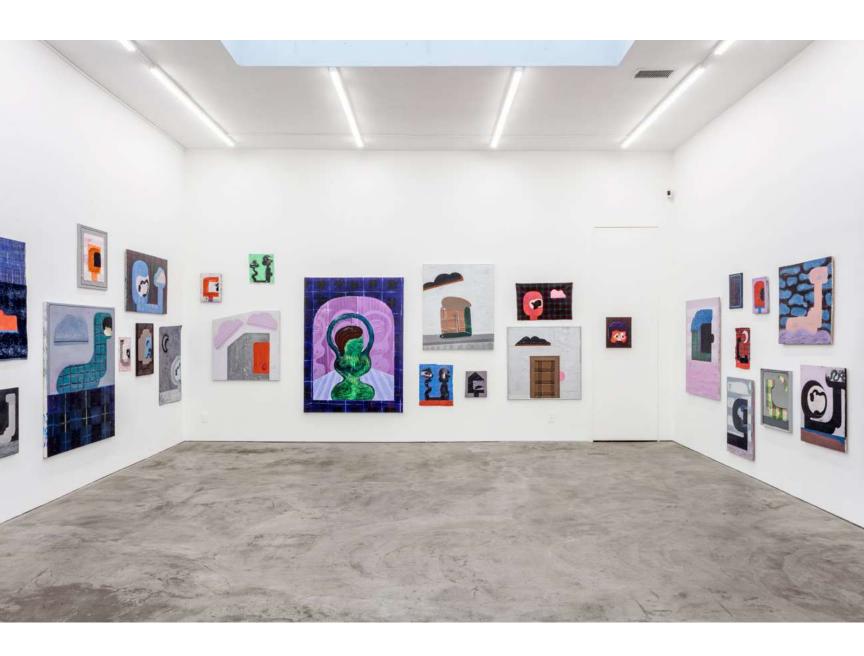


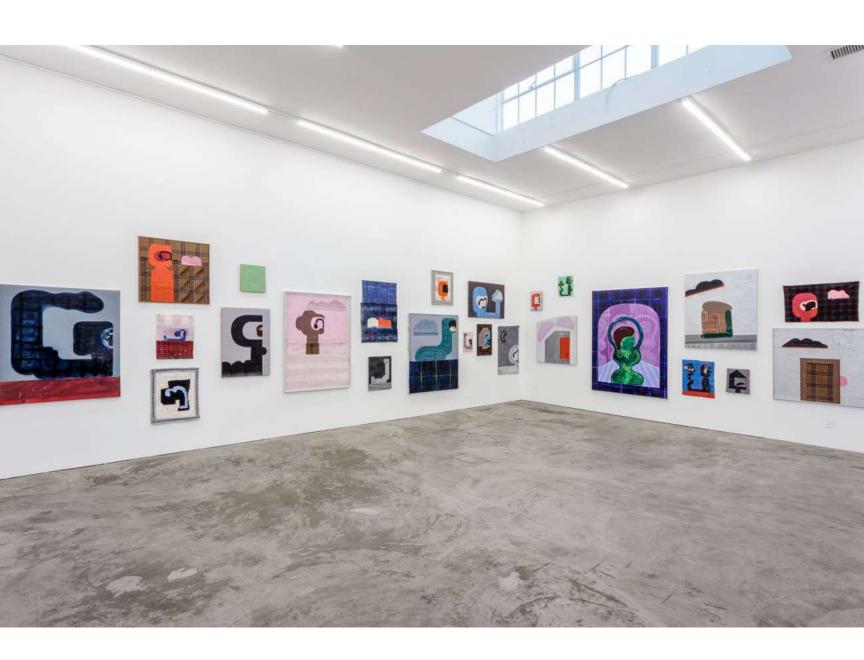




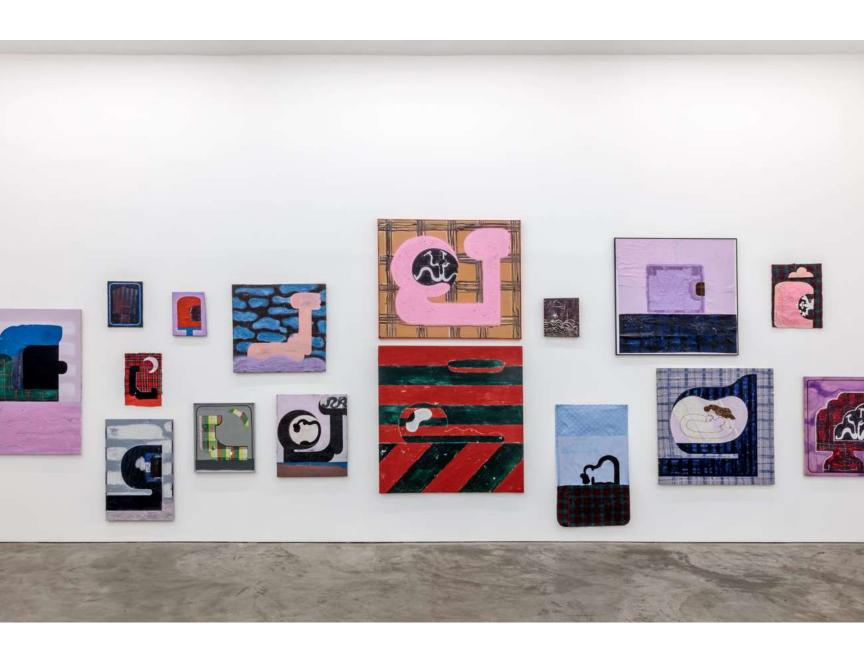
















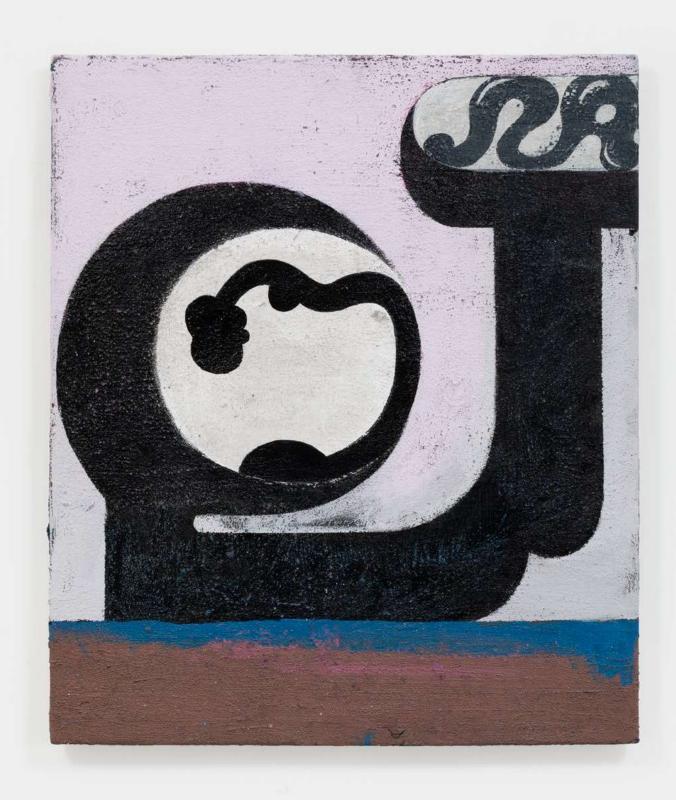


Psychopathe Piégé, 2021 Acrylic, oil on wood 33 1/2 x 26 in 85 x 66 cm (NAE21.005)











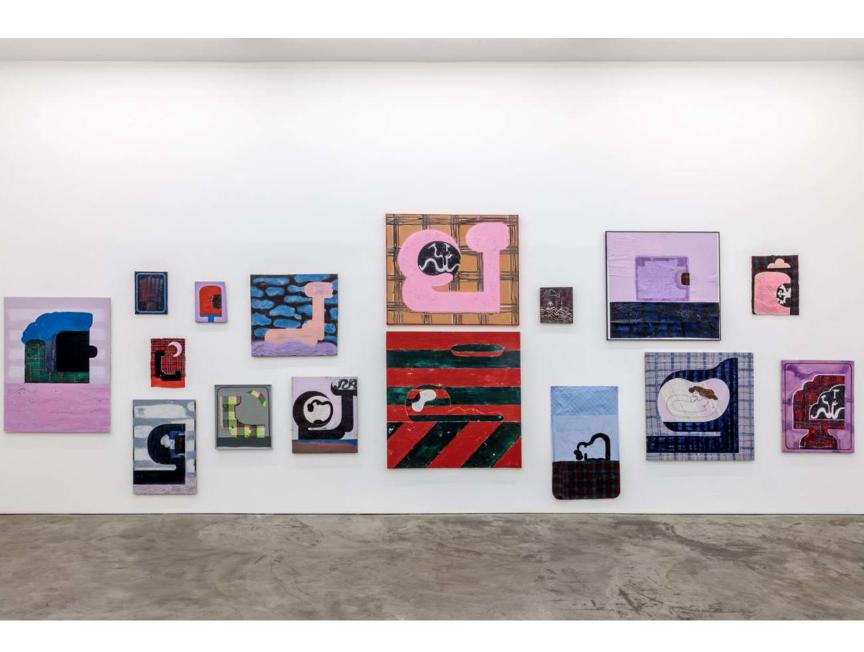


Origin, 2021 Acrylic and tape on wood 21 5/8 x 18 1/8 in 55 x 46 cm (NAE21.010)













Trapped (Silhouette Sign Lamp), 2021 Lamp with plexiglass, PU-foam, steel, wood, spray paint, glitter, polaroids and acrylic 47 1/4 × 31 1/2 in 120 × 80 cm (NAE21.047)





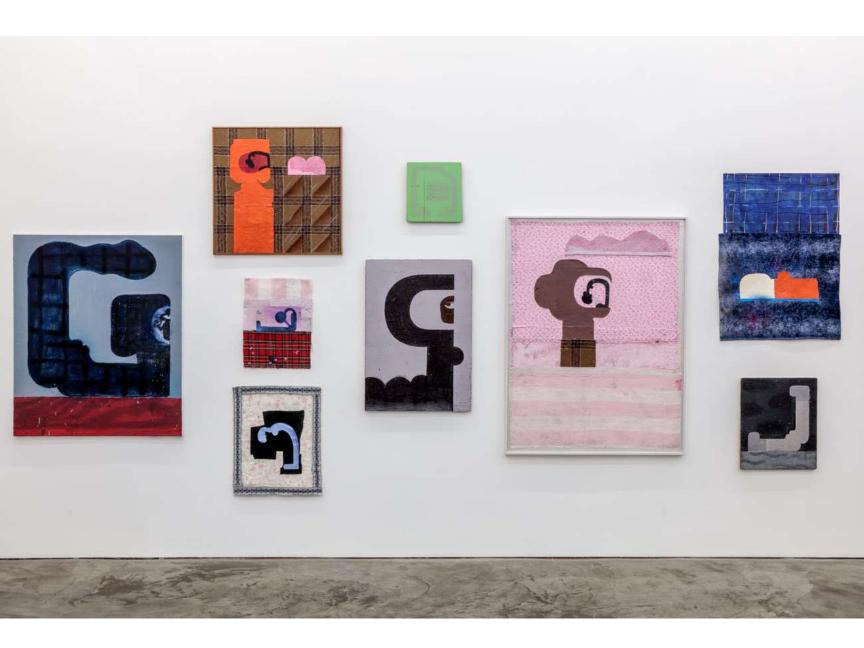
Overmoed, 2020-2021 Acrylic, oil, filter, textile on wood 16 7/8 x 13 3/4 in 43 x 35 cm (NAE21.016)

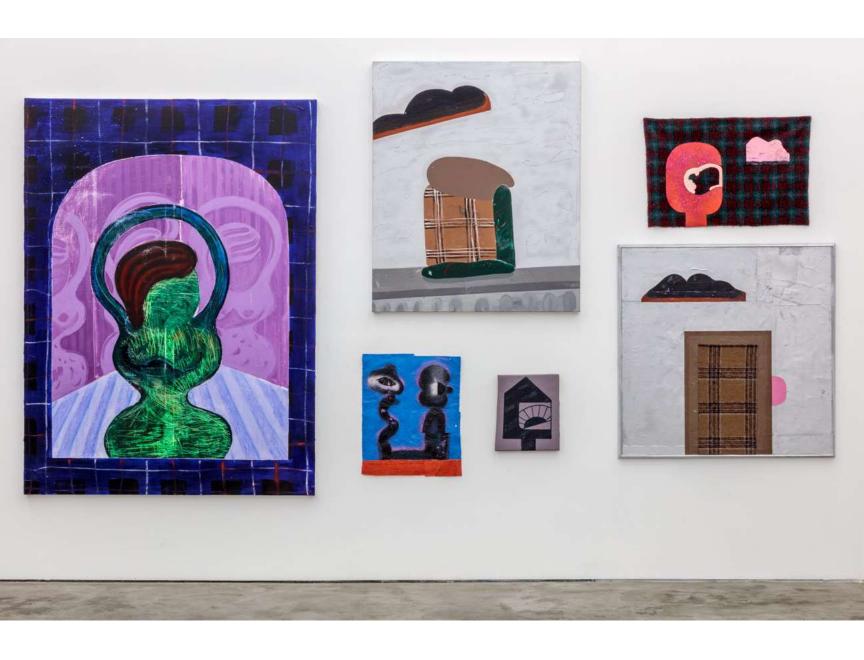




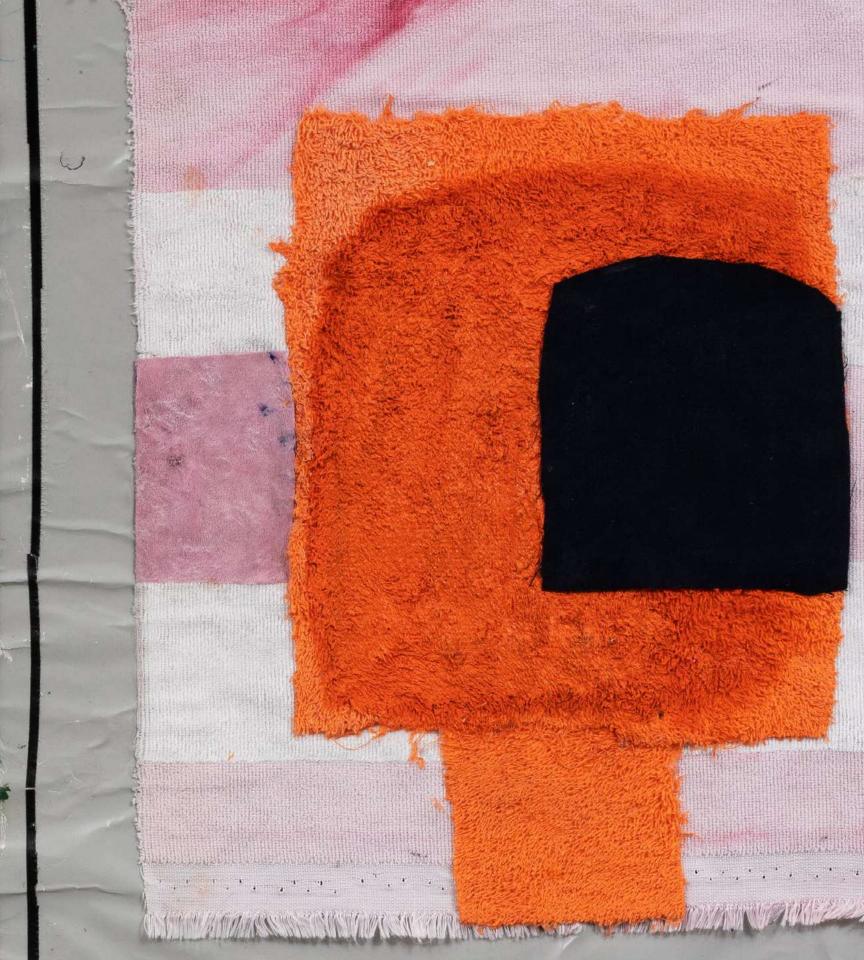
Void, 2021 Acrylic, glitter, filler, paper, spray paint on wood 33 1/8 x 21 5/8 in 84 x 55 cm (NAE21.018)

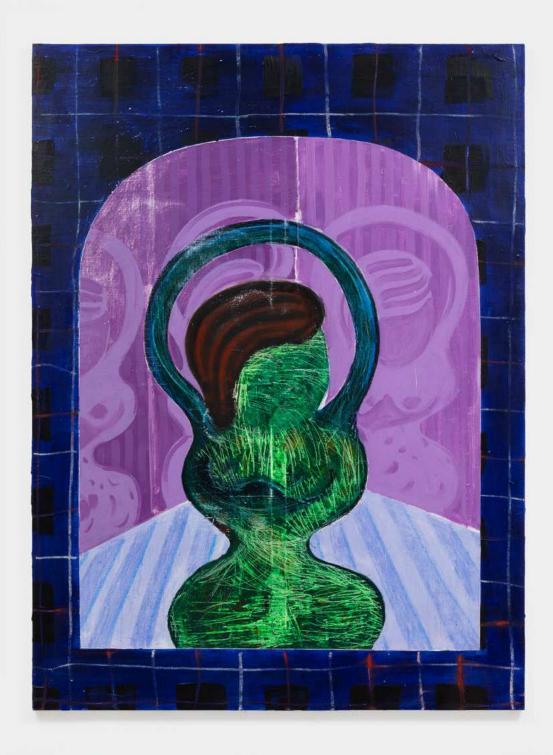


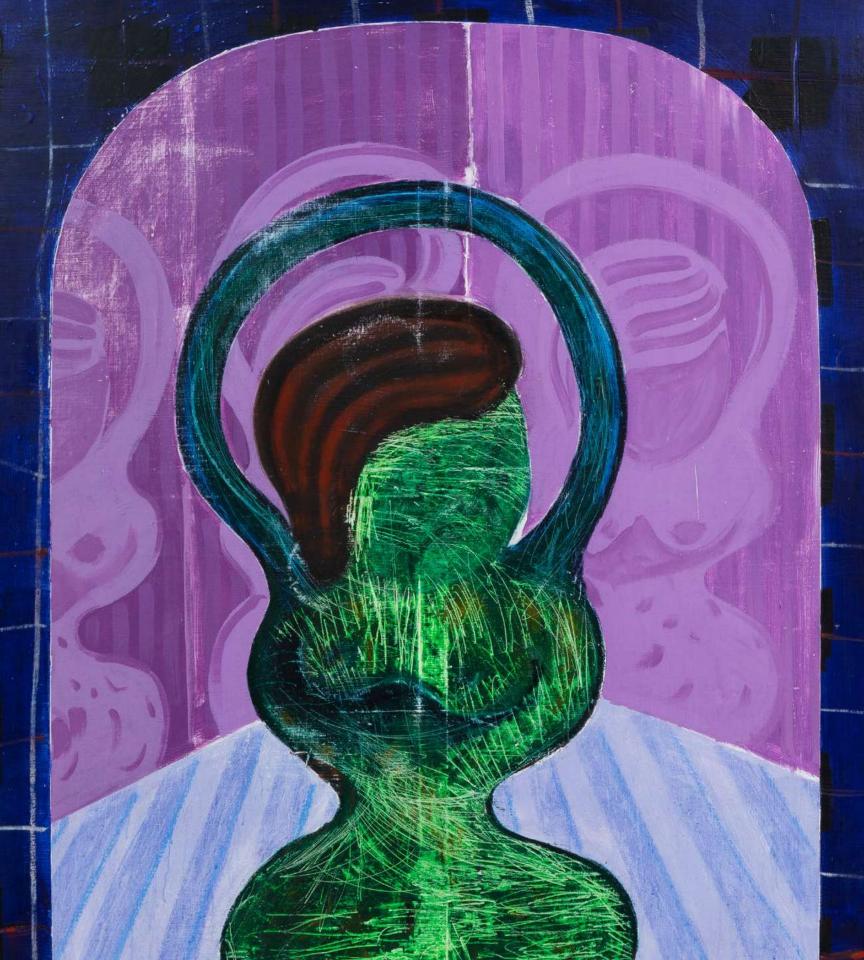


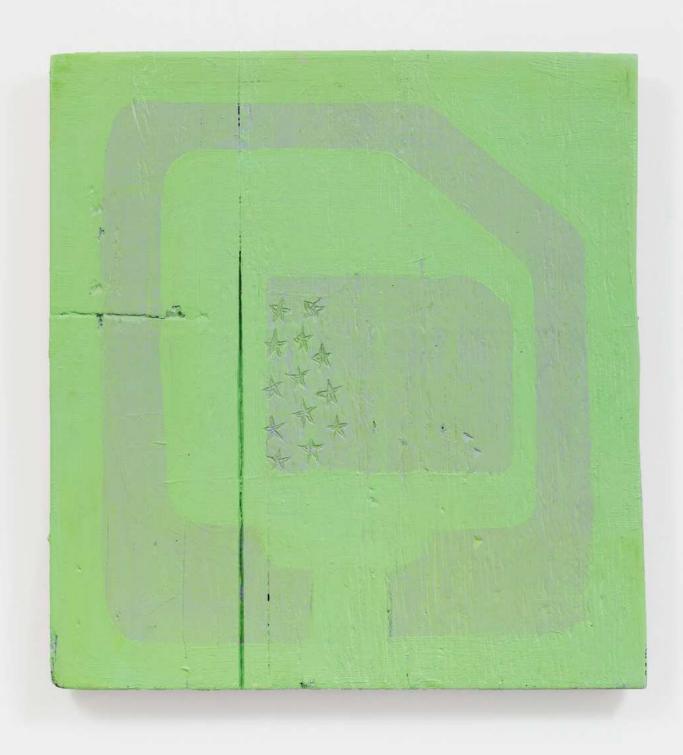


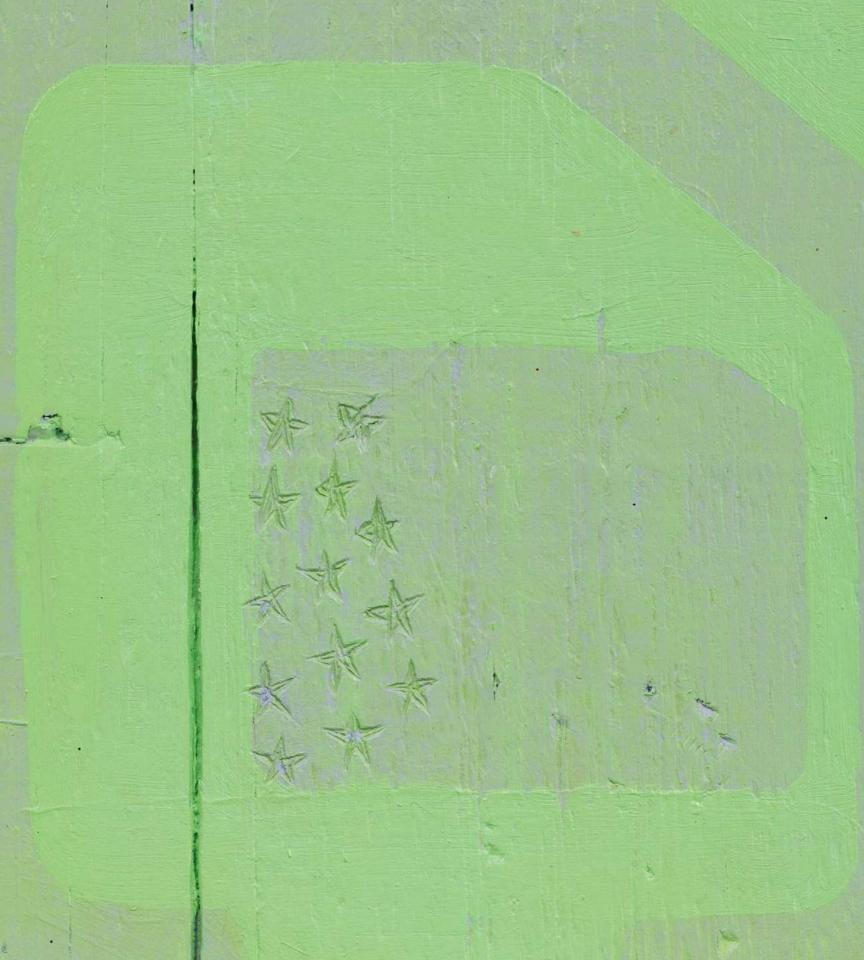


























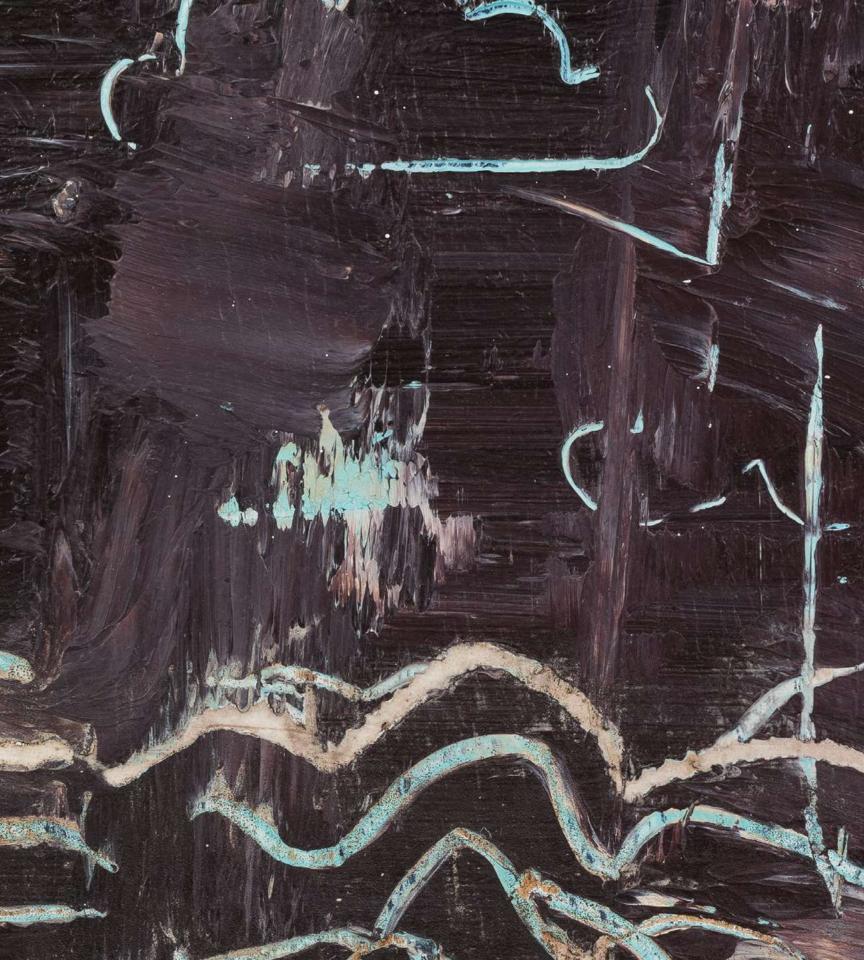














Voyeur, 2019-2021 Acrylic, oil, spray paint, oil sticks on wood 14 1/8 x 11 1/8 in 36 x 28 cm (NAE21.033)













Untitled, 2021 Acrylic, paper, coloured pencil, oil sticks, oil on wood 38 5/8 x 37 3/8 in 98 x 95 cm (NAE21.036)

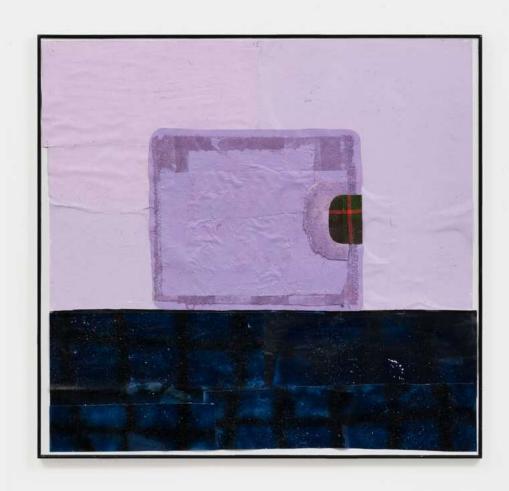


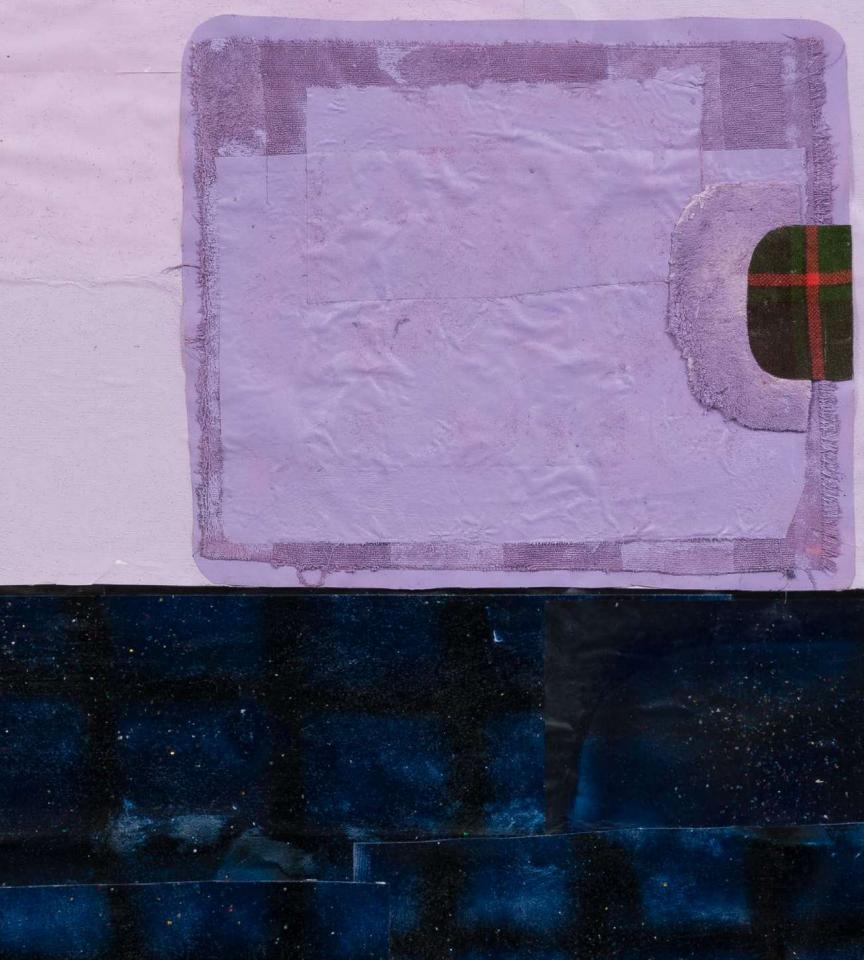




Narcissist, 2021 Acrylic, paper and textile 41 x 24 3/8 in 104 x 62 cm (NAE21.027)

























Skepticism, 2021 Acrylic, oil sticks, glitter, paper on wood 35 7/8 x 25 1/4 in 91 x 64 cm (NAE21.043)





(NAE21.012)



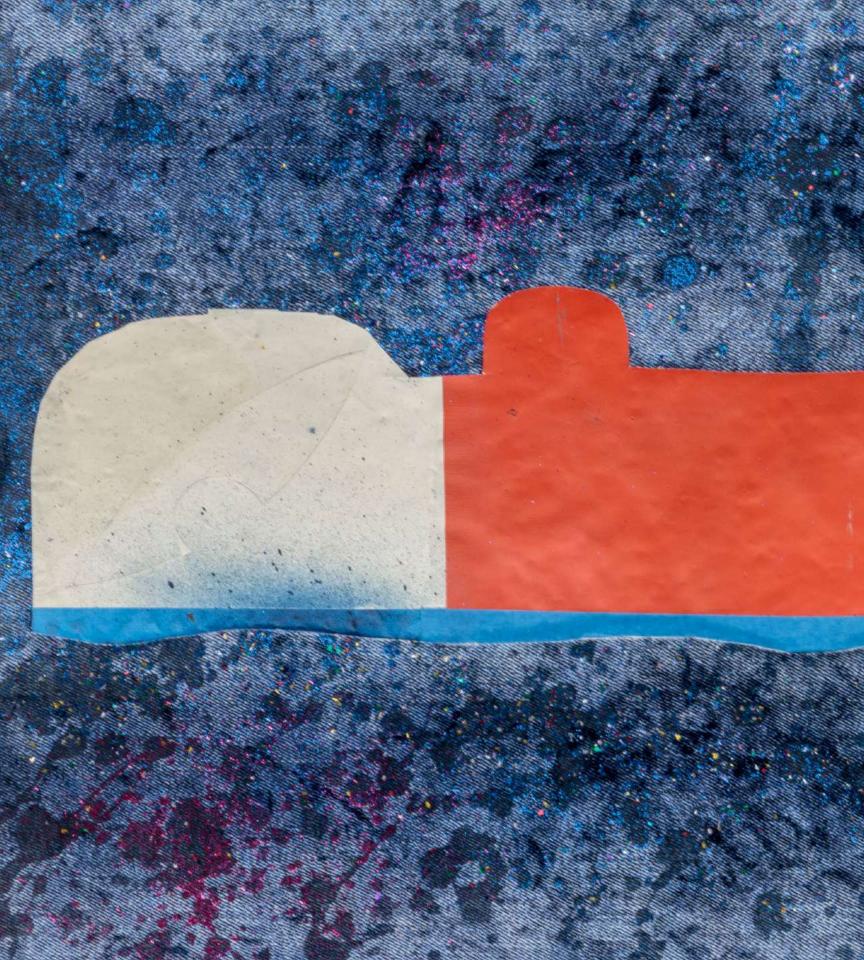


The Snake Charmer Eye, 2021 Acrylic, oil sticks, paper on textile 21 5/8 x 20 7/8 in 55 x 53 cm (NAE21.037)





Floater, 2021 Textile, paper, tape, spray paint, acrylic, glitter and varnish 39 3/8 x 29 1/8 in 100 x 74 cm (NAE21.011)

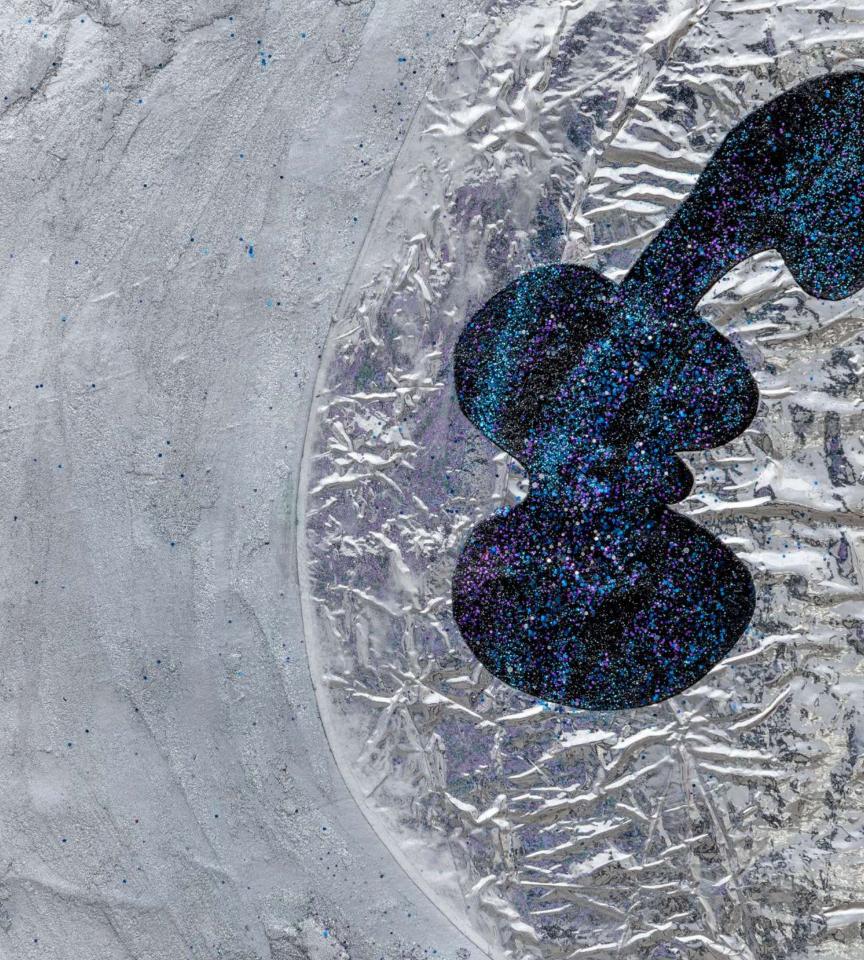








Starry Nothings, 2021 Acrylic, glitter, paper, aluminum tape, spray paint, oil sticks, varnish on textile $40\,1/8\times27\,1/2$ in 102×70 cm (NAE21.041)





Swallower, 2020-2021 Acrylic, paper, spray paint, oil sticks on textile 21 1/4 x 15 3/4 in 54 x 40 cm (NAE21.029)





Lone Rider , 2021 Textile, acrylic and spray paint 15 x 11 3/8 in 38 x 29 cm (NAE21.022)

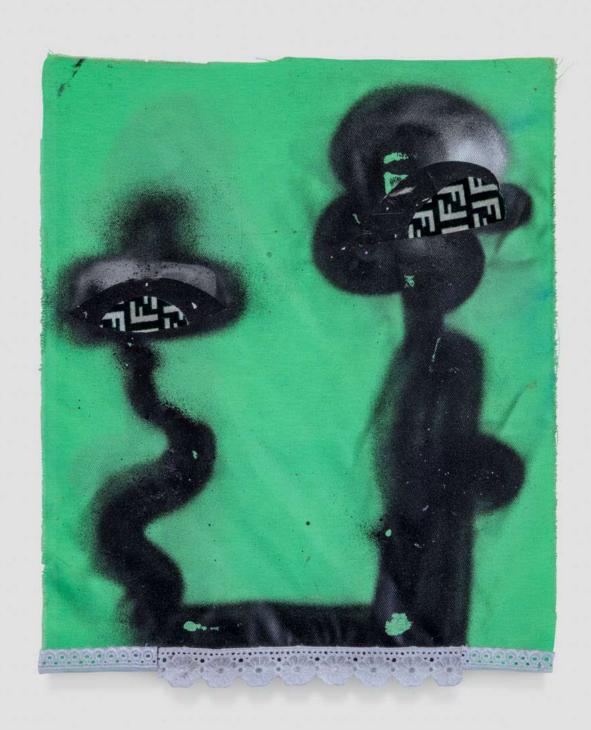


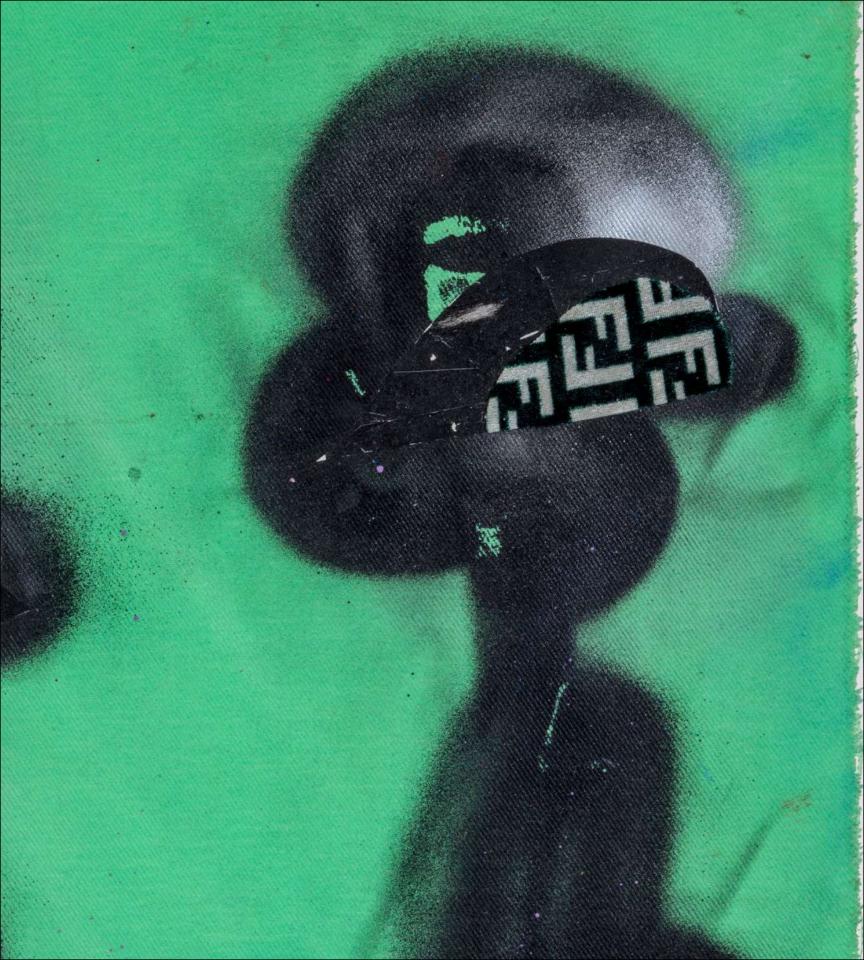
















NEL AERTS

Born 1987 in Antwerp, Belgium Lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium

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2005 KSO Heilig-Graf institute, Turnhout, BE

2009 Master in the Arts, Royal Academy of Fine Arts (KASK), Ghent, BE

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2021 SQUIRM, Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, US SWALLOW MAELSTROM HUT HEADS, PLUS-ONE Gallery, Antwerp, BE
- 2020 Inner Wavy Turmoil Baby, Eleni Koroneou Gallery, Athens, GR Slippery Wobbler, Carl Freedman Gallery, Margate, UK
- The Waddle Show; a Counteract, M Museum, Leuven, DE
 Haus der Wanderer, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster, DE
 Der Schlangenbeschwörer, Kunsthalle Lingen, Lingen, DE
 The Other Self (with Ellen Berkenblit), Eleni Koroneou Gallery, Athens, GR
- 2018 Independent Brussels, Carl Freedman Gallery, Brussels, BE Film de Fenêtre, NICC, Brussels, BE Checkered Checkmate, PLUS-ONE Gallery, Antwerp, BE
- 2017 Ontmaskerd Maske, De Warande, Turnhout, BE Lord Nelson FW17, CASSTL, Antwerpm BE The Village Idiot, Carl Freedman Gallery, London, UK
- 2016 Jack and the Paradise Cruise, Horizont Gallery, Budapest, HU Hundred Zundert, Posture Editions, KIOSK, Ghent, BE Mural, Beurskafee, Beursschouwburg, Brussels, BE
- 2015 Billenkoek, KIOSK Gallery, Ghent, BE
 Verzopen Vaarwaters, trampoline, Antwerp, BE
 Lord Nelson Posters, Stadslimiet, Antwerp, BE
 "120 Minutes," Art Brussels, Brussels, BE
 De Zundert Tekenigan, Vincent Van GoghHuis Galeerie, Zundert, NL
 Nacht Zwevers, kunstlNgang, Cultuurcentrum Merksem, Antwerp, BE
 The Best Couples in the World, MOREpublishers, GRAMM, Brussels, BE
- 2014 Doppelgänger, Trampoline, Antwerp, BE
 Lord Nelson's Portrait Gallery, Carl Freedman Gallery, London, UK
 A Two-Course Meal, (with Kristian Devantier), Galleri SPECTA, Copenhagen, DK
- Al draagt een aap een gouden ring, het is en blijft een lelijk ding (with Vaast Colson), Studio Katleen Vinck, Antwerp, BE
 Nel Aerts, Liste Basel, Galerie VidalCuglietta, Basel, CH
 Nel Aerts, Art Brussels, Galerie VidalCuglietta, Brussels, BE
 Kunstenaars Van Morgen (en alle dagen nadien), Stadslimiet, Antwerp, BE
 POST, Kunsthalle Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, DK
 De averechtse val van Huize Frankendael, Frankendael Foundation, Amsterdam, NL
- 2012 De dans rond het uurglas, project space, Galerie Vidal Cuglietta, Brussels, BE
- 2011 Whilst the Master sleeps, (with Vaast Colson), Alt Antverpia, Antwerp, BE De Grote Overtocht, Hectoliter, Brussels, BE



2010 Traveling after Zbigniew Herbert and Pan Cogito, Fort 8, Hoboken, BE Undisclosed Gathering, Croxhapox, Ghent, BE In De leer, Anastasis 2010, Helig-Grafindtituut, Turnhout, BE

2009 One with the Medicine Man, Pocketroom, Antwerp, BE Goodbye Old Paint, Royal Academy of Fine Arts (KASK), Ghent, BE

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2021 Gest, Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, US Lipstick and Gas Masks, Muhka - Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp, BE

2020 De Nacht. De Warande. Turnhout. BE In Vitro, Muhka - Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp, BE

2019 Just So Stories, Gallery Nosbaum Reding, Luxembourg, LU Der Rausch, Arti et Amicitiae, Amsterdam, NL Teixeira de Freitas Collection, Sala de Arte of the Santander Foundation, Madrid, ES Salon de Peinture, M HKA, Antwerp, BE Looking at the world through rose colored glasses, PLUS-ONE Gallery, Antwerp, BE 5 Schilders, Cera-collectie, Leuven, BE The Skateroom, Brussels Gallery Weekend, Brussels, BE

Off Balance, PLUS-ONE Gallery, Antwerp, BE Duckumenta, Studio Omstand, Arnhem, NL Ceres, Hof De Bist, Ekeren, BE

2018 ADA, Thomas Rehbein Galerie, Cologne, DE Soft?, MOMU, Maurice Verbaet Center, Antwerp, BE

Middle Gate II, curated by Bart De Baere, CC De Werft, Geel, BE

Affiniteiten #1, with Vaast Colson, Marie José Burki, Mitja Tušek, curated by

Stella Lohaus, LLS Paleis, Antwerp, BE Drawing Project, Extrapool, Nijmegen, NL Private Choices, De Centrale, Brussels, BE

Nel Aerts, Vaast Colson, Marie José Burki & Mitja Tušek, LLS Paleis, Antwerp, BE Soft? Tactile Dialogues in Collaboration with MOMU, PLUS-ONE Gallery, Berchem, BE

2017 Pélamide, curated by Lilou Vidal, Gladstone Gallery, Brussels, BE #infiniteflowersplusone, PLUS-ONE Gallery, Antwerp, BE Biacho, Het Bos, Antwerp, BE

2016 Living in dreams, curated by Frank Koolen and Els Fiers, De Bond, Bruges, BE Show me yours & I'll show you mine, exhibition by Vaast Colson, Muhka, Antwerp, BE Verloren Ruimte, Verloren Ruimte, Antwerp, BE Ten Dans: Curated by Lieven Segers, Cultuurcentrum, Maasmechelen, BE

2015 Rock, Paper, Scissors, Primo Piano, Paris, FR 11 kunstenaars tegen de muur, curated by Lieven Segers, Antwerp, BE Character Traits, Asya Geisberg Gallery, New York, NY, US Me, Myself and I, trampoline, Antwerp, BE Inhabitations, Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau, CH Six possibilities in painting, Galerie Bernhard, Zürich, CH Blue Pink Black, Carl Freedman Gallery, London, UK Tranen uit de Schelde, Art's Birthday, M HKA, Antwerp, BE

Wrijving van gedachten/Antwerpen-Zundert, Van GoghHuis, Zundert, NL

Before the Food Fight, Chocoladefabriek, Tongeren, BE



Comic Relief, Levy Delva,, Brussels, BE Art Los Angeles Contemporary, Carl Freedman Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, US

2014 De vierkantigste rechthoek, Kunsthal KAdE, Amersfoort, NL

ATLAS, MOTInternational, Brussels, BE

We Will Never Surrender, The Bries Space, Antwerp, BE

Van de sokkel, Antwerpse avant-garde ten noorden van het zuid. Hof De Bist, Ekeren, BE

L'Europe des Artistes, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo, NO

Season of the Which, Castillo/Corrales, Paris, FR

VIRUS, Netwerk, Aalst, BE

Heyoka, Stadslimiet, Antwerp, BE

Medium of Everything, Zwart Zaal, Ghent, BE

Elevator Pitch, Base Alpha Gallery, Antwerp, BE

Exercise Emphathy, Komplot, Brussels, BE,

Verf Na Van Eyck, Croxhapox, Ghent, BE

No Basement is Deep Enough, 44sic, Antwerp, BE

2013 Salon der Angst, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, AT

Time Space Poker Face, Be-Part, Waregem, BE

Pop Up Expo ZOUT, BAM and Vrijstaat O., Muzee, BE

2012 Definitional Disruptions, Kunstraum, London, UK

Un-Scene II, Wiels, Brussels, BE

BOOKSHOWBOOKSHOP, Be-Part, Waregem, BE

Tiny Abstracts of Today, Martin Van Blark Gallery, Antwerp, BE

2011 Aerts-Ceulers-Herman-Poelmans, part of En dan nu... muziek, Vaast Colson, DeGarage, Mechelen, BE

You can't have your cake and eat it, Scheld'apen, Antwerp, BE

Art's Birthday, M HKA, Antwerp, BE

Billboard Projects, Antwerp, BE

2010 Traveling after Zbigniew Herbert and Pan Cogito, Poetry and Arts festival, Watou, BE

POP ART, NICC, Antwerp, BE

Koaz Lily, VVB8 Gallery, Antwerp, BE

2009 Coming People, S.M.A.K., Ghent, BE

Registration of an action in Oudenaarde, Versus V, Oudenaarde, BE

'Canvas Film' Piece of Cake, Scheld'apen, Antwerp, BE

Vaast Colson in Kiosk, KIOSK, Ghent, BE

2008 In-Flux, Machine a Eau, Bergen, Mons, BE

2007 Input/Output, De Bond, Brugge, BE

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2019 The Wanderer Paintings, edition of 750, published by Triangle Books

Wobble Doodle, edition of 300, Lord Nelson #15, Antwerp , BE

Cookie Head, cookie, unlimited edition, Lord Nelson #13, Antwerp, BE

2018 Checkered Checkmate, edition of 300, published by Lord Nelson #12 & PLUS-

ONE Gallery, Antwerp, BE

Lord Nelsons Photo Album (#1), edition of 20, Lord Nelson #11, Antwerp, BE

Ontmaskerd Maske 2, edition of 500, Lord Nelson #10, Antwerp, BE

2017 Ontmaskerd Maske, edition of 500, De Warande, Turnhout, BE



The Village Idiot, edition of 200, Lord Nelson #9, Antwerp, BE

- Billenkoek, (with Gerard Herman), edition of 64, KIOSK, Ghent, BE Hundred Zundert, Posture Editions #19, Ghent, BE
 Lord Nelson Posters, edition of 200, Lord Nelson #7, Antwerp
 Al draagt een aap een gouden ring, het is en blijft een lelijk ding (with Vaast Colson), poster, edition of 500, Clean Press #25 & Lord Nelson #5, Antwerp, BE
 De averechtse val, edition of 150, Lord Nelson #4, Antwerp & Galerie Vidal Cuglietta, Brussels, BE
 Looking in Looking out, edition of 12, Lord Nelson #3, Antwerp, BE Catalogus: De dans rond het uurglas, edition of 50, Lord Nelson #2, Antwerp, BE
- 2011 Het gehavend handje (with Gerard Herman), edition of 36, Antwerp, BE
 Whilst the Master sleeps (with Vaast Colson), edition of 300, Clean Press #15, Antwerp, BE
 Have a happy one (voor Jan, voor Jelle), edition of 2, Antwerp, BE
 Undisclosed Gathering, edition of 200, Antwerp, BE
 Undisclosed Gathering, limited colour edition, Antwerp, BE
 De grote overtocht, edition of 100, Antwerp, BE

Boomhanger (self-portrait), postcard, edition of 200, Lord Nelson, Antwerp, BE Take a seat, stool, booklet and metal chain, edition of 17, Lord Nelson #6, Carl

- 2010 Wandelingen (voor Vic), edition of 1, Antwerp, BE
- 2009 Registratie van een actie in Oudenaarde, edition of 20, Antwerp, BE
- 2007 Untitled, edition of 30, Ghent, BE

Freedman Gallery, London, UK