

HANNAH LEE***Dumbo's Feather*****June 7—July 5, 2025****Opening reception:****Saturday, June 7, 6-8pm**

James Fuentes is thrilled to announce Hannah Lee, *Dumbo's Feather*, marking the artist's West Coast debut and first exhibition with the gallery. The exhibition presents a new group of oil paintings by the artist completed this year, which depict a series of dream-like observational scenes of life suspended mid-moment.

While Lee's choice of subject is guided by a deeply private, internal motivation, in her paintings we encounter the resulting "outside" of this process; convening our own set of tacit experiences with those buried in the image. Lee's remarkable command of her medium makes way for depictions of the subtle, sometimes preternatural aspects of human life. In *Rainy Night*, an unselfconscious gesture echoes between two figures, implying a moment we all implicitly *know* in our bodies. With *Passing Time*, an unstaged apartment scene is necessarily different to our own home space, but nevertheless familiar in the feeling of personal time metered through the changing qualities of natural light sweeping through domestic space. Whether populated or absent from the figure, Lee's paintings are highly realistic of humanity and its emotional, technological, and architectural impressions.

Inside of Lee's painterly process, hidden paradoxes belie the realism at hand. Having decided upon a particular composition, now referenced through a photograph after the fact, she will apply a faint grid and begin to render the image piece by piece. In doing so, a kind of abstraction occurs, much like looking at or hearing something many times over that it no longer resembles itself. In this moment, the practice of painting itself reconfigures the artist's connection with her subject by forming a new means for direct communion beyond that of *looking at*. In fact, Lee is significantly visually impaired, meaning that her unaided visual field is condensed to subjects physically closest to her eyes. By using photographs in-hand and pre-mapped through a grid, Lee's imagery in the end carries a sense of photographic memory in more ways than one.

As Lee's realism presses at the experience of life in motion—ever so slowly and instantaneously—it also encompasses the surfaces and thresholds through which we come into being. Although settled in paint, these images are unseparated from the cyborgian technologies that mediate human expression. In *Mauna Kea*, we gaze upon the sun as it casts a vast mountainous terrain into shadow, as well as the nearer silhouettes of people also quietly observing this beauty. While this painting comes closest to a depiction of The Sublime, it also forms a key to all other works in this show. Most directly, *Chrome Jacket* centers in on a passing, glistening moment that takes place just outside of *Mauna Kea's* west border, as if abstracting the events at hand into a single, additional square from Lee's larger grid.

And so, where a piece of mountain connects one frame into the other, we also begin to see this grid as something ever-expanding. If every image here takes place at once in the space of the exhibition, it also does so in a far more spacious perceptual sense. In an argument for consciousness as a holographic process, that grid forms into a fine mesh that describes every surface and reflection in every experienced moment. In Lee's hands, each painting forms a portal, through a single tender moment, into that vast and incredible universe of being.

Hannah Lee (b. 1989, Madison, WI) graduated with a BFA from the Parsons School of Design, New York in 2012. She has presented solo exhibitions at Entrance Gallery, New York and Bunso Gallery, Manila; and has participated in group exhibitions at Simone Subal Gallery, New York and Jeffrey Deitch Gallery, Los Angeles. *Dumbo's Feather* is Lee's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles. She lives and works in New York.

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