

JAMES FUENTES

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IZZY BARBER

Maspeth Moon

April 8—May 9, 2021

James Fuentes is pleased to present works by **IZZY BARBER**, *Maspeth Moon*.

Maspeth Moon presents a new series of Izzy Barber's observational plein air paintings of daily life across New York. Neither symbolic in their imagery nor purely abstract, Barber's paintings readily capture the sensations and movements of life as it happens in shared spaces. As one deciphers their details, these works become time-based in a new sense, steadily revealing elements of their subjects within vivid, textured scenes. Here, detail plays against ground, as if caught in a satisfactory moment that might as easily dissipate again. Certain areas of focus emerge in each: across multicolored bodies of fruit, momentary human gestures, fizzing lights, and the linear accents of signs and buildings. A sense of perspective is firm in each instance and yet ever shifting for the artist: peering down long streets, up brief inclines and into the lit ceilings of higher floors, or looking steeply downwards from those upper stories. Barber's remarkable manipulation of mood through image demonstrates her studied eye and an intent engagement with her surroundings through this series, which she began over the past year. Brought together, these works carry the brilliant dynamism that exists in each moment of life as it continues across the city. As Barber returned to certain locations, they convey its distinctly cyclical yet changeable nature as well.

For Barber, painting from life prompts new opportunities for experimentation. The limitations of time and physical space alike structure these paintings. Barber's works have always contained a private but direct quality—they are quiet yet full. Her earlier paintings were self-portraits, followed by portraits of friends and family made in close proximity. Barber then moved on to a series of "studio paintings" in which she detailed the doorways and entryways of her interior surroundings. These images record thresholds and indeed marked a transitional period in her work. Barber also began a series of monotypes, which provided a new mode of direct observation that collapsed the contact between subject, object, and image. Following this progression, Barber's new paintings made throughout the city bring together her interests in a new way, in which crowds of people become less about particularized individuals, yet are different too from an abstraction of people. In these moments, light and time begin to shift from the previously nocturnal through spans of daylight and sunset. A sense of threshold is again registered, most literally at street corners, on sidewalks, and looking through scaffolding; but more carefully within the space between the action of strangers and that of the artist as temporary observer—and then again as we now look into these works. Herein lies their shared activity and atmosphere.

IZZY BARBER (b. 1990) is from Gowanus, Brooklyn and lives and works in Queens, New York. She received her MFA from the New York Studio School in 2017 and BA in Studio Arts and Human Rights from Bard College in 2011. Barber's work has been exhibited at venues including James Fuentes, New York; Galleria Franco Noero, Turin, Italy; New Orleans Art Center; and in the 2012 Brucennial, among others. This exhibition follows Barber's presentation through JamesFuentes.Online, *Last Call and Chinatown Paintings* in 2020.

For further inquiries, please contact Katrin or James at info@jamesfuentes.com.