

ABATTOIR

PARK, Shawn Powell

Abattoir Gallery is pleased to present *PARK*, Shawn Powell's first solo exhibition with the gallery. Powell has participated in several exhibitions with Abattoir such as *Shawn Powell + Lauren Yeager, Nada-Miami, Nada and Friends, Abattoir at Foreland*, as well as curating exhibitions *The Dead Don't Die* and *Near Zero* at the gallery.

Continuing the motif of a top-down cinematic viewpoint, Powell's new works look at the world from a hovering perspective. Moving away from the setting of the beach, Powell's new body of work presents large-scale still lifes of items carefully positioned on a field of grass in a park. Objects such as a park bench, bike, and blanket are painted to scale and accompanied by enigmatic items, suggesting witty and wry narratives through playful yet calculated arrangements. Leaves and shuttlecocks float above the surface as if captured mid-flight, adding a new element of visual and conceptual levity to these works.

Powell also presents new shaped tondo works. Colorful paintings of parasols are situated alongside delicate, one-inch-wide shaped hula hoop paintings adopting the form of their referent. These paintings embrace the strictures of reductive or conceptual abstraction, while simultaneously poking fun. Straddling the line between representation and abstraction, these paintings utilize the language of abstraction while simultaneously appearing as trompe l'oeil objects.

Recalling Georges Seurat's *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* (1884-1886) or Fernand Léger's *The Bicyclist* (1951), Powell's paintings offer a new perspective on scenes of leisure. However, in the current moment in which figurative painting is ever present, there is a palpable, even eerie absence of characters populating the scenes. Maybe they are simply out of frame, or is there something more sinister at play? Perhaps, they were all suddenly called into work; this is America after all, where we love our commodified objects, but have no time to spend with them. The propositionality of painting is something Powell likes to leave his viewers with, offering participation rather than dictation.

Shawn Powell has presented solo exhibitions at 106 Green, Brooklyn, NY; Chapter, New York, NY; *Tennis Elbow* at The Journal Gallery, New York, NY; and at Webster University, St. Louis, MO. His work has been included in numerous group exhibitions at venues such as Marrow Gallery, San Francisco, CA; The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, PA; and *NADA New York*. He has been featured online or in print in *Vanity Fair*, *Brooklyn Magazine*, *Bedford and Bowery*, *Art F City*, *Hyperallergic*, the *White Columns' Artist Registry*, *Artmaze Mag*,

Cleveland Scene, and Juxtapoz Magazine as well as in *Secret of the Friendly Woods* with the Wassaic Project, and the CAN Journal. He co-curates the project space Gazebo Gallery in Kent Ohio, which was featured in New Art Examiner. He was awarded a 2021 Ohio Arts Council Individual Excellence Award Grant. Powell received his BFA in Painting and Art History from the Kansas City Art Institute and an MFA in Painting from Hunter College where he was presented a Tony Smith Award Grant. This past summer he participated in the residency and exhibition *nido* in Monte Costello di Vibio, Umbria, Italy. His work is included in the Fidelity Art Collection and the Cleveland Clinic Collection. Powell is an Associate Professor of Painting and the Graduate Coordinator of the School of Art at Kent State University.

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