

Morgan Presents

Chloe West: *Somebody's Sins*

April 6th—May 2nd, 2023

155 Suffolk Street, New York, NY 10002



“Jesus died for somebody’s sins but not mine”—Patti Smith¹

In *Somebody's Sins* Chloe West presents a reflective, robustly independent, meditation on mortality, mourning and the relationship between the animate and inanimate. This relationship is explored specifically through West's focused attention on the female form and the recognition of woman as the source of fertility. The impression the paintings leave on the viewer is one of tenderness rather than sorrow; together these pictures represent a celebration of life through delicate moments of solitude.

Three large portraits anchor the presentation, each speaking to an element of doubt and the ineffable chasm between life and death. *Doubting Thomas* is a resoundingly corporeal picture, attesting to each individual's inability to completely grasp one's own mortality; referencing both the Gospel of John's characterization of Thomas the Apostle, as well as Caravaggio's *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas* (c. 1601-1602), West's *Doubting Thomas* relates to the viewer through sensation, rather than via any abstract concept or morality. *Lamentation Portrait* echoes Dante's death mask, in confronting us with the uninterrupted gaze of the artist. While *Neck of a Female Saint* provides a feminist recasting of the image of the *Pantocrator*. In each of these works West speaks both to a universal experience of individual autonomy, while also focusing attention on the role of the artist as creator, in this case specifically her role, to further her exploration of womanhood.

West's continued investigation of the female form through portraiture, particularly through the structure of her compositions, demonstrates that the potential for life, animation, and what is left behind after the death of any organic material, the inanimate, find their meeting point in relation to the female form. West's paintings thereby undercut the Romanticized narrative of the rugged American man, who stands alone against the forces of nature, by inverting that narrative and recasting woman as at the center of the tension between life and death.

Chloe West (b. 1993, Cheyenne, WY) received a BFA from the University of Wyoming in 2015, and an MFA from Washington University in 2017. She is the recipient of the 2021 Creative Stimulus Award from Critical Mass for the Visual Arts. West has exhibited at Morgan Presents, New York; Harper's, Los Angeles and New York; Artgenève, Geneva; Galerie Mighela Shama, Geneva. Her work has appeared in publications such as ArtMaze Magazine, Booooooom, and Silver Space. West currently lives and works in St. Louis.

¹Patti Smith, *Gloria*, Horses, 1975

Morgan Presents is a New York exhibition space founded and directed by Morgan Aguiar-Lucander, an independent curator, writer, dealer, and advisor to both artists and collectors.

Morgan Presents invites pairs of artists to create an exhibition that offers a new perspective into their practice. Morgan Presents is not a representing gallery, and no one artist will exhibit twice during the run of the program. Morgan Presents intends to offer an insight into today's emerging vanguard of painting and sculpture in collaboration and dialogue with established artists and galleries both domestically and abroad. A hardback publication, cataloguing each exhibition, will be published at the conclusion of the project. The curatorial program will be presented out of 155 Suffolk Street in Manhattan, commencing from September 2021.

For press inquiries please contact Morgan Aguiar-Lucander at morgan@morgan-presents.com

Image: *Doubting Thomas*, 2023, Oil on linen, 72 x 60 inches, 182.9 x 152.4 cm