

Rachel Hecker – *Exhibition Title Goes Here*
September 10 – October 22, 2017



yours mine & ours is pleased to present, *Rachel Hecker: Exhibition Title Goes Here*, the artist's first solo exhibition in New York. Actively producing work for the past 35 years, Hecker's paintings and sculptures highlight her distinct inner dialogue, alluding to how the human mind collects, observes, connects, and denotes the passage of time all counterbalanced with her sometimes dark but ever-present sense of humor.

Paintings of ketchup packets, her mother's handwritten notes, marionette dolls, expiration date stickers, cigarette butts, price tags, laundry tags, and garden gnomes are interjected by oversized sculptures of gum drops, matchsticks, a finger, a hospital bracelet, and bread loaf expiration tags. Hecker mines surroundings for source material and renders her work with a distinct style. Painted with an airbrush, a tool often disavowed by figurative painters, the canvases become democratized as a means to slow down the reception of an image—starting with one area of focus and then softening in others. Her sculptures have a child-like playfulness in their scale and subject-matter. In her handling of material, Hecker gives a nod to the pop art generation while simultaneously pulling away from it through rendering the discarded, damaged, and dilapidated.

Hecker highlights the mundane and disposed but renders each with technical precision, suggesting the importance of these objects. The result is a maximal floor-to-ceiling installation cum taxonomy of imagery that laughs at itself while sharing a distinct and deeply personal sensitivity to the passage of time. The burnt cigarette abuts a nearly illegible handwritten note from the artist's ailing mother. There's an acknowledgement of the absurdity of these objects, too: Why paint the backside of a ketchup packet with pristine accuracy? Or enlarge, to comical scale, a

gum drop candy? Hecker's tongue-in-cheek sense of humor pervades, reminding her viewer to not take it all so seriously while counter balancing the emotional and intellectual content.

In contrast to the maximal installation on the ground floor, Hecker has transformed the lower gallery into a minimal chapel-like space. A bench lines the front wall, illuminated by fake candles, where the viewer is confronted with three paintings of Jesus. Upon closer inspection, one realizes these paintings are not just of Jesus Christ; rather, they are a Jesus-celebrity hybrid. Using rock stars and recognizable cultural figures, Hecker creates her own modern-day idol. The absurdity continues to abound as if Hecker is simply waiting for the laughter to rise, while simultaneously highlighting the centrality of idolatry in western history and consumer culture.

Hecker's practice seeks to re-contextualize overlooked, discarded and beat up objects of the everyday. Through her pristinely painted canvases and highly finished sculptures, the mundane is humorously and sensitively elevated. Much like the exhibition title, the form belies the subject. Throughout it all, Hecker allows her viewer a window into her own aesthetic experiences while the persistent passage of time is challenged in the memorialization of her subjects.

Rachel Hecker lives and works in Houston, TX. She received her BFA in sculpture from Moore College of Art in Philadelphia, and her MFA in painting from the Rhode Island School of Design. She has shown extensively at institutions such as the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, the Dallas Museum of Art, the Menil Collection and ArtPace, and in commercial and university galleries and alternative spaces throughout the United States. Her work is represented in many private and public collections, including the Houston, Dallas, San Antonio and New Orleans Museums of Art, the Menil Collection, the General Services Administration; and the Federal Reserve Bank in Dallas. Hecker has received critical attention in publications including The Los Angeles Times, Art in America, Art Papers, and ArtReview (London), and BLAU, (Berlin). She received a National Endowment for the Arts Award in painting, the inaugural award for "best in show" from the Texas Contemporary Art Fair, and an Artist Award from the American Institute of Architects for her work on civic art projects. In 2013, she was named Texas Artist of the Year by the Art League Houston.

Image: Rachel Hecker, Installation view, 2017.

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