

EMMA MCINTYRE

Pearl Diver

February 11–March 18, 2023



EMMA MCINTYRE. *The right to remain obscure*, 2023. Detail.

Château Shatto is delighted to announce Emma McIntyre's exhibition, *Pearl Diver*. This exhibition of new paintings will be the artist's first in the gallery space.

Emma McIntyre's paintings form aesthetically exploratory mental views through gestural compilation, wherein the desirous occupations of the mind and residues of memory causally interact with physical states. Unfastened from representation yet still of-the-world, McIntyre's paintings solicit the restlessness of the eye, get stuck in the stickiness of phenomena, and tug at the paradox of stillness in painting.

Procedurally, McIntyre's paintings can be split in two: paint materials poured on a horizontal surface and marks made on the substrate once tipped upright. What happens at each orientation is connected through a shared expression of spillage: chemical spill, affective overflow, an abundance of phenomenal substance that spills onto the surface, excess arising from relating the mind to the world, capsized interiority finding its match in medium.

Brush lines connect with the edges of pooled paint, then bounce back into their own dimension in a back-and-forth that intensifies both. Iron oxide manifests its edge as linework as rust settles into a formation that will never truly settle. The seductive potential in McIntyre's work is often skewered by moments of jagged impulse and affrontive annotation; a wrist provoked to tie lascivious knots across the surface or silhouettes of camellia sewn out of veins of blue paint.

Sensuousness is mediated by intentionality, per Hegel, yet intentionality also yields to alchemical surprise. In earlier moments of McIntyre's painting practice, there was a clear occupation with the grid and a deliberate calling on of the warp and the weft. In more recent works, McIntyre doesn't lay the grid down so formally, yet it appears from the properties of the paint itself, as pigment is separated from binder and the striations begin to intersect like mesh.

"Like a pearl diver who descends to the bottom of the sea, not to excavate the bottom and bring it to light but to pry loose the rich and the strange, the pearls and the coral in the depths, and carry them to the surface." —Hannah Arendt, *The Pearl Diver*, 1968

Hannah Arendt offered the metaphor of pearl diving as a way of relaying Walter Benjamin's approach to accessing history. Pearls are the product of a defensive secretion and the diver brings their polished forms into a new and displaced present. Arendt's metaphor sees history transmitted not as authority or tradition, but as fragmentary, discontinuous, transformed. This corresponds to McIntyre's process, as the appearances of art-historical references present as though drawn from obscuring depths and brought to a new altitude.

Arendt's essay begins with the the verse that an invisible Ariel sings to Prince Ferdinand in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*:

Full fathom five thy father lies,
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of his that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Ding-dong.
Hark! now I hear them, -ding-dong, bell.

Emma McIntyre (b. 1990, Auckland, New Zealand) lives and works in Los Angeles. She graduated with a Bachelor of Visual Arts from Auckland University of Technology in 2011 and a Masters of Fine Arts from University of Auckland's Elam School of Fine Arts in 2016. In 2019, she was awarded a Fulbright General Graduate award; she subsequently received a Masters of Fine Arts from ArtCenter College of Design, Pasadena in 2021.

In March 2023, McIntyre will open a solo presentation as part of L'Almanach 23 at Le Consortium, Dijon. Recent solo exhibitions have been presented at Coastal Signs, Auckland; Air de Paris, Paris; and Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland. McIntyre's work is in the permanent collection of Long Museum, Shanghai, and has been featured in *Artforum*, *Frieze*, *Flash Art*, and *Cultured*.

For inquiries, please contact galler@chateaushatto.com. Château Shatto is open Tuesday through Saturday, 12–6pm.