

## GRACIE DEVITO

### Recent Paintings

September 7 - October 10, 2021



Three Day Cleanse, 2020, Oil on Canvas, 64.5 x 76.5 in.

The New York Studio School is pleased to announce its first solo presentation of works by Los Angeles-based artist Gracie DeVito. Gracie DeVito, Recent Paintings, includes new paintings from 2020 and 2021. The exhibition will be on show from September 7 to October 10, 2021.

DeVito's recent works recall a sort of painterliness that has historically been founded on two key precepts: the understanding of painting as a form of primary process thinking and the practice of transcription. With regards to the former notion, Donald Kuspit writes about the paintings of Leon Kossoff—an important source of inspiration for DeVito's work—that they “inflamm[e] our subconscious.” In addition to being a proponent of the sort of “gestalt-free” painting alluded to by Kuspit here, Kossoff was also an avid practitioner of transcription. Neither copying nor reinterpretation, the practice of transcription that Kossoff swore by—as does now DeVito—was technical and analytical. It was a process of reverse engineering carried out for the sake of the betterment of the transcriber as a painter.

The paintings included in the present exhibition are not transcriptions, but they engage with the history of painting in a similar way. Hectic churns of blues and greens recall the use of metaphors of aquatic depth and organic growth in modernist abstraction. Yet, in DeVito's paintings, any allusion to the metaphysical is shot through with flashes of silliness and banality. While very rarely figurative in the traditional sense of the term, they are littered with little jokes. A cosmic swirl is punctuated by a spillage that can only be described as unedifying. The virtuosity of the handling of color and paint is undercut by the intermittent use of familiar devices and effects.

The inner experience mobilized by these paintings is a contaminated one, and the titles of the paintings serve as hints as to by what. They liken the vertiginous depths with which the paintings confront us to the vortexes of meandering Reddit-threads and free-wheeling podcasts. They compare the catharsis toward which the paintings seem to prod us to the sort of transformations one might experience when following a three-day juice diet, physical and psychological. This is the sensibility and contingency that DeVito brings to the tradition of painterliness that she operates within and beyond.

DeVito (b. 1985) lives and works in Los Angeles. Her work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Tif Sigfrids, Overduin and Co. and Nicelle Beauchene and has been reviewed in Artforum and The New York Times. She received her MFA from CalArts in 2012 and has been participating in classes at The New York Studio School since 2003.

Niels Henriksen, August 2021