

To Suffer a Lick

A solo exhibition of new works by Malik Roberts
Opening April 20 at Allouche Gallery (77 Mercer St.) from 6-9 PM

Exhibition statement: Keith Estiler

Malik Roberts's upcoming solo exhibition, *To Suffer a Lick*, presents a collection of thought-provoking works that invite viewers to explore their own sense of liminality and uncertainty. The exhibition features a range of compositions that are both dynamic and abstract, with each piece showcasing the artist's unique approach to deconstructing and fragmenting figures.

Roberts's inspiration for this exhibition came from the pandemic, which created a sense of liminality in its own right, leading to a mental battle of waiting for the outcome. He spent a lot of time at home, which is reflected in the works, with subjects depicted in homelike spaces. Through his use of line work, Roberts accentuates the emotions and perspectives he wants viewers to feel, creating an amalgamation of people, scenes, emotions, and his own thoughts and feelings to create each subject.



'Chamber of Reflection' 2023

The title of the exhibition, *To Suffer a Lick*, reflects the feeling of waiting for an opportunity while enduring uncertainty, encapsulating the sense of grace that comes with success. Roberts's use of oil, oil pastel, and charcoal on canvas showcases his influences from Caravaggio, Francis Bacon, and Picasso, with a darker color palette highlighting a Caravaggio baroque style with a single light source. "The concept behind the show was based on liminality and uncertainty within myself and the works I was creating. A lot of the ideas for works were conceptualized through the pandemic, which was a time of liminality in

itself. It was a bit of a mental battle, waiting for the outcome. A lot of time was spent at home, you'll see a lot of my subjects reflect that being depicted in homelike spaces, because that's what life was like then," said Roberts.

The exhibition's centerpiece, 'Chamber of Reflections,' is the first piece Roberts painted and shown to the world via promotion. It sets the tone for the exhibition, showcasing emotional and spatial liminality, with a bed serving as a familiar object. Roberts uses his line details to create separation between the parts of the subject that are fading away in contrast to the parts that are still together. Moreover, 'A Feeling of Falling' explores the theme of hubris and uncertainty, with the subject falling into a void between light and darkness, highlighting aspects of the subject being in-between the light and the void of uncertainty. The accents on the edges were done with charcoal to accentuate the subject falling, with the painting viewed as a scene in which the subject is falling through.

Meanwhile, another work titled 'Ignorance is Bliss' captures the theme of turning a blind eye to problems, with a young woman sitting in front of a computer or camera, ignoring the world's chaos behind her. The work highlights the notion that "a person who does not know about a problem does not worry about it," with the young woman's focus on technology serving as a symbol of how society is often more focused on its devices than the world around it as the artist described.



'Ignorance is Bliss' 2023

In regards to his process, Roberts expressed: "I wouldn't describe my style as a collage, but more of a deconstruction or fragmentation of figures and subjects. I see a collage to be more of putting things together, and I more so take things apart to show a bit more of the inner workings of my subjects mind and feeling. The line work is used to accentuate some of the emotion and perspective I want felt by those viewing the painting. That's why I use an amalgamation of people, scenes, emotions, my own

thoughts and feelings to create a subject. It's more about the different parts of a person's psyche, what they may be going through or feeling. With my line detail I tend to highlight the more expressive part of the subject and showcase another layer to a person's personality."

Overall, 'To Suffer a Lick' is a powerful exhibition that encourages viewers to explore their own sense of liminality and uncertainty, with each work showcasing Roberts's unique signature style and approach to deconstructing and fragmenting figures.

Allouche Gallery is proud to present this exhibition, and invites all to visit from April 20 to May 17 to experience the latest works of Malik Roberts.

About Malik Roberts

Malik Roberts is an artist from Brooklyn who creates abstract figurative works that deal with contemporary social issues such as police brutality, exclusionary politics, and systemic racism. Through prismatic fragmentations of form, he breaks down the complexities and tensions that are often hidden by his subjects' appearance in his deconstructed portraits. His work has been featured in several publications, including *The Washington Post*, *Hyperallergic*, *PAPER*, *Whitewall Magazine*, and *Milk*. Roberts has also collaborated with brands like American Express, Nike, Adidas, and Bombay Sapphire, and has celebrity collectors such as Adrien Brody, Paige Reifler, and Slick Woods.

In the vein of Kehinde Wiley and Roy Lichtenstein, Roberts manipulates recognizable images and conventions from art history and the media to challenge the viewer's perception of reality. He starts by deconstructing a familiar icon or landscape into basic geometric shapes before layering charged source imagery and cartoonish extremities onto the geometric x-ray of his subjects. Through this unique artistic language, Roberts conveys both the haunting similarities between reality and caricature as well as their spiritual dissonance.

About Allouche Gallery

Established in 2014, Allouche Gallery is home to an international roster of some of the world's most recognized and culturally significant contemporary visual artists. Through its highly curated exhibition program, the gallery has garnered a reputation for highlighting artists – whose work directly challenges preconceived notions of contemporary visual culture – and affirming their place in 21st Century art. Home to a select group of both established and rising artists across a variety of disciplines, Allouche Gallery represents the work of Felix R. Cid, Ron English, Nick Georgiou, Paul Insect, Rafa Macarron, Reinoud Oudshoorn, Michael Reeder, Malik Roberts, Stickymonger, Swoon, Hannah Yata, and UFO907. Founded by Eric Allouche, Allouche Gallery is one of New York's premiere commercial art galleries and the preeminent exhibitor of contemporary art.

For more information about the upcoming show at Allouche Gallery, please visit www.allouchegallery.com

Press contact:

Press@allouchegallery.com

Bailey@allouchegallery.com