

# JUPITER

Stephanie Pierce: *Simple Pleasures*

Jupiter

October 8 – November 18, 2023

Opening reception: October 8, 6-8 PM

1217 71<sup>st</sup> Street, Miami Beach, FL 33141



Miami – October 5, 2023 – Jupiter is pleased to present *Simple Pleasures*, a solo exhibition of new and never-before-seen work by Brooklyn-based artist **Stephanie Pierce**, which continues her longtime practice of working from prolonged observation—for a duration of months, if not years—to capture the effervescent fluidity of passing time.

While Pierce’s work has thus been rooted in a phenomenological experience of light, space, and time, most often framed by the view from her window, recent changes in her home life have caused her newest work to become more centered on the immediate present—and those simple pleasures of life in her house and garden. Though the softly geometric patterns of color that emerge as thin washes of paint are layered one upon another so as to create a translucent kaleidoscopic effect of

refracted light continue to characterize her work, the paintings on view now evidence a newfound stillness.

Echoing the artist’s practice of tracking the movement of the sun as its rays move across her chosen subject from day to day, Pierce’s painting of her studio table at which her partner draws in a sketchbook while a cat sits on his lap, is aptly titled *Heliotropes*, after those plants that similarly follow the sun. Pictured on the table are items of personal significance to the artist: a cassette tape of Otis Redding, an iPhone playing Alexander Bashlachev, and a reproduction of a Fra Angelico painting and other nods to the history of still life painting via the birds and pitcher of water. Much like a song’s effective power, Pierce seeks to conjure emotionally resonant memories through this web of signification engendered by carefully chosen objects.

Pierce’s reverence for the small universe that is her house and yard in Brooklyn resounds in such plein air works as *sun cipher* (2022-2023), *goth garden* (2021-2022), and *feather of Maat* (2022-2023) which picture the humble decadence of a lush summer garden burgeoning with totemic flowers, overflowing arbors you could get lost in, a striated multicolored sky, and cats bathing in the sun. By referencing the Egyptian myth wherein one’s heart is weighed after death to see if it is heavier than the feather of Maat, Pierce’s eponymously titled painting speaks to the visual lightness of this painting and the impossible sweetness of its subject.

The works on view thus center an indulgence of the artist’s quotidian loves and unlock an intimate world by way of sustained consideration and care. Sometimes these loves change over time, as

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evidenced by *Hex-achord* (2019-2023), which, as it was painted over a span of four years, previously featured three other individuals that the artist had been dating where the current figure sits—none of whom lasted long enough to be enshrined in a painting.

It was, in fact, the continuity established with this new partner and the experience of sharing a space that served as a starting point for many of these paintings. This reorientation from solitude to accompaniment is reflected in varying degrees of joy and longing, from sweetness and lightness in *Feather of Maat* (2022-2023) in contrast to the suggestion of a heavier weight in *nobodysayinganything* (2022), or *moonraking* (2022). The work probes the ineffable found in the everyday and aims to locate a material poetry through these things that are close to the artist. In the artist's words, "It is through making a painting that I come to understand what is there."

## About the Artist

Stephanie Pierce (b. 1974 Memphis, TN) received her MFA from the University of Washington, Seattle and attended the Yale Norfolk School of Art. She is an Assistant Professor of Painting at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. Her work has been exhibited at The Henry Art Gallery, Seattle; The Staten Island Museum, New York; and Asheville Art Museum, North Carolina. She received a Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant in 2014. Her work has been featured in *New Yorker Magazine*, *Harper's* and is included in the collections of William Dreyfus, Joan and Roger Sonnabend, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, Walton Family Foundation and the Boston Public Library among others. Pierce lives and works in Brooklyn.

**Caption:** Stephanie Pierce, *Heliotropes*, 2023, Oil on linen, 40 by 36 in. 101.6 by 91.44 cm., (SP010) © Stephanie Pierce. Photo by Luis Corzo. Courtesy of the artist and Jupiter, Miami Beach, FL

Press Inquiries: [info@jupitercontemporary.com](mailto:info@jupitercontemporary.com)