MARC DENNIS:
PARADISE LOST

January 30 – March 13, 2021
CUTTING DARKNESS, PASTING LIGHT: BOUQUETS OF SELFHOOD IN THE BLOOMS OF MARC DENNIS

Essay written by:
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Help us to be the always hopeful
Gardeners of the spirit
Who know that without darkness
Nothing comes to birth
As without light
Nothing flowers

May Sarton, The Invocation to Kali (1971, excerpt)
PROLOGUE: THE TALE OF TWO BOBBITTS

Once upon a time there lived a husband and wife, John Wayne and Lorenna, in a town called Manassas, Virginia. After a long night of drunken revelry, John Wayne returned home early one morning, rather dishevelled and somewhat amorous. Lorenna, sleepy in bed, did not share her husband’s enthusiasm. Alas Mr. Bobbitt rather insisted on Mrs. Bobbitt’s affections and, after much wrangling, the twomomentarily became one. Almost instantly John Wayne fell into a deep sleep. Lorenna, now disturbed and finding herself thirsty, got out of bed and went to her kitchen for a drink of water. It’s at that moment that everything changed. And in but the blink of an eye.

After putting down her empty glass, Mrs. Bobbitt reached for a close-by carving knife. One eight inches long. With the knife in her hand, she returned to the bedroom where her husband was sleeping. Immediately, almost instinctively, Mrs. Bobbitt pulled back the bed sheets, pulled down her husband’s underpants and then proceeded to cut off his penis with the knife.

Upon completing Mr. Bobbitt’s painful and wholly unexpected emasculation, Mrs. Bobbitt proceeded to walk to her car, still dressed in her sleeping attire. Knife in one hand, her husband’s severed member in the other, she managed to grab her car keys and then, with one hand, turned the ignition and started driving. Where to, she did not know. She just drove. All Lorenna could think about was going to work at the nail salon that morning. It was only when she became annoyed by the fact that she was driving with one hand did she realise it was because she was actually still in possession of that rather sacred bit of Mr. Bobbitt in the other. Suddenly filled with horror, she threw the dismembered penis out of the car window into a roadside field and drove on. A few minutes later Lorenna stopped driving and called 9-1-1.
John Wayne’s penis was found hours later after a lengthy search of the area. He, in the meantime, had already made his way to hospital. Eventually, after a 9 ½ hour operation, Mr. Bobbitt had his penis re-attached. Overnight his reincarnated penis became a celebrity - even if he did not - starring in two pornographic films in the 1990’s: John Wayne Bobbitt: Uncut and Frankenpenis. Mr. Bobbitt was acquitted of rape. Mrs. Bobbitt was found not guilty of attempted murder due to insanity.

And they both did not live happily ever after.

Now, I know you’re thinking it, so I may as well write it. What the fuck has that got to do with this exhibition of Marc Dennis’ work? Well, dear reader, the tale of these two Bobbitts finds numerous connections to the strategy, enterprise and visual universe of Mr. Dennis’ work. Both serve a cocktail of transformation, poured with generous glugs of precision, decision, execution, determination, coordination and volatility, topped off with a slice of exuberant resistance. A cocktail that is called the ‘Cut and Paste’ given their shared investment in a tessellation of parts to reimagine new landscapes, both factual and fictive; both fantastic and phantasmagoric. Loreanna’s act and Marc’s art are both so forensically recalled that, in essence, they become a microcosm all of their own. A self-standing, self-fulfilling symbiosis of several tributaries of Signification, be they autobiographical or political, social or cultural, that sits, like an island, in the maelstrom of their respective identities. You see, self is never fixed. Life would be oh-so boring were that so. Life is fluid; it flows with all sorts of possibilities and potential for change, both good and bad. Some planned and witting; others automatic and spontaneous. Loreanna proved that by slicing her husband’s cock off one morning. Marc proves that like this:
CHAPTER I:
ALL THINGS IN NATURE ARE DARK EXCEPT WHERE EXPOSED BY THE LIGHT

Oh, halo on fire
The midnight knows it well
Fast, is desire
Creates another hell
I fear to turn on the light
For the darkness won’t go away
Fast, is desire
Turn out the light
Halo on Fire


The history of art has always been a contest between light and dark. Physically, spiritually, emotionally, conceptually. Think about those primordial marks made in caves in Lascaux around 17,000 years ago and how they were ultimately established, at best, in dusky, dusty light, permanently pushed to shadowy margins by Nature herself. Think about those Baroque masters Caravaggio and Rembrandt and how they articulated gasps of hope but also sighs of abandon chiefly by having their dramatic tableaux enacted in spaces crepuscular and caliginous; their scumbled chiaroscuro kneading both Sign and Signifier, now electrified into this fundamental, timeless struggle between light and dark; between good and evil.
So it is that Marc Dennis’ exhibition is a Colosseum in which this gladiatorial dichotomy takes place between matrices and indices of light and a darkness that attempts to slowly suffocate it. Such combat is played out in several arenas: natural, political, personal and even art historical. This exhibition also sees Marc constantly inveigh against his own extraordinary faculty for graphic description; his curiosity with composition and mystery of mosaic privileged over his ability to render so phenomenally. We see this debate between ‘lifelike’ and ‘like life’ rage in a painting like Lover’s Sabbath (2018). An impossibly dense and detailed battalion of different flowers marches to the front of the picture plane out of a moody, pitchy background. Trails of that Cimmerian ground cling on to the flowers like bad memories, appearing to suck them back into the darkness, subverting not just the Image of the flowers but also their symbolic thrust. Marc’s background here is that dark, pre-historic cave in Lascaux. That elemental, enigmatic space where one examines, confronts and challenges oneself. Where one attempts to subvert identity, formality and beauty in an effort to shine the light of life out of the darkness of death.
Lover's Sabbath, 2018, oil on linen, 58 x 57 inches
CHAPTER II:
WE TOO SHALL DIE

“No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because death is very likely the single best invention of life. It is life’s change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new.”

Steve Jobs, from his Stanford University Commencement Speech, 2005.

Marc’s bewildering contagion of flowers is, of course, his contemporary take on those grandiloquent bouquets of kismet and conscience that tumbled out of Dutch Still Life painting in the Seventeenth Century. Artists like Jan Davidsz. de Heem (1606-1683/4) and Jan van Huysum (1682-1749) painted immensely complicated floral compositions, bursting with a multitude of different flowers, that both celebrated life but also offered the foreboding warning of their – and thus our – inevitable death. Flowers fade; wealth wanes; life lapses.

Memento Mori (2018) clearly articulates this dichotomy between the buzz of life and the inertia of death. Lying down, a young woman’s cascade of brown hair fills Marc’s composition. Her arm, with a skull-like Rorschach pattern tattooed upon it, rests upon her meticulously executed hair. A moment of light in an avalanche of brooding brunette. Her porcelain hand, so classically posed, seems to hover between pose and repose. Another floral miasma invades the composition with an army of different flowers crossing the hair and abbreviated face of this supine woman. Their intense vitality, tight tessellation and exhaustive hyperreality fuels a chromatic explosion in contradistinction to the quiet ripples of darkness that whisper each strand of her hair and the horizon of inky blackness at the top of the composition that feels like the end of the world.
Memento Mori, 2018, oil on linen, 32 x 34 inches
CHAPTER III: A CITY FULL OF FLOWERS

“Flowers grow out of the dark moments.”


Flowers perfume the important milestones of our lives, so that their symbolic power shifts with context. They help us to celebrate at weddings, issuing notice of a bride’s purity or fidelity. They help us to grieve at funerals, noting majesty, innocence and sympathy. Flowers greet you in the grand alcoves of hallowed museums. One gifts flowers to those they (hope to) love or to those who are unwell or are just down in dumps. Flowers bring cheer, comfort and connote passion. They are Nature’s little tokens of love and solace. No wonder, then, that Marc has been painting flowers for some eighteen years now. And he has no intention of stopping anytime soon.
Meandering its way through the various sets of meanings proposed by flowers is this distinction between public and private. Between what one sees and what one feels. This distinction is intrinsic to Marc’s work. He recently spoke to me about poppies and how he clearly recalls seeing carpets of those flowers in The Wizard of Oz (1939) as a child, mesmerised by their brilliant, hypnotic scarlet and their rather cruel soporific qualities, tranquilizing poor Dorothy to the benefit of the Wicked Witch of the West. Poppies, of course, are an enduring symbol of remembrance of the Great War; their crimson colour symbolising the blood spilled during the First World War and, specifically, during battles held in the poppy fields of Flanders. One must also note that opium poppy seeds produce an array of alkaloids and can, when processed accordingly, produce heroin. Dorothy, sleepy in that field of poppies in Oz, is less a Signifier of innocence or beauty, but more one of narcolepsy, narcotics and necrosis. Marc is interested in introducing flowers – as Sign and Signifier – to the dark side. He wants to inveigh against flowers, much as he does against his own artistic enterprise, not through destruction or interrogation but through displacement and recontextualization. He wants to explore the symbolic language of flowers by swimming in them, becoming polluted by them. He wants to be engorged in supernovae of flowers.

This maximalist strategy effloresces nowhere better than in Marc’s painting, America (2019). Whilst this work was executed before the Coronavirus pandemic took over all our lives, this painting is surely an image for our times. The entire composition throbs with an assortment of flowers, pushing in and out, up and down, stretching and straining like an eager dog desperate to be let off its lead. This floral collective seems to have arrived from out of the woods, once again briefly mentioned in but a slither of description running along the top of the composition like a breaking news tickertape. Accompanying the flowers are two animated bluebirds, purloined from Disney’s cartoon Snow White and the Seven Dwarves (1937), along with a single, tiny skull, appropriately positioned next to one of Judy Garland’s huge, red poppies. Innocence again confronted by experience; life once again stares death in the face.
The rainbow of human experience is etched into this huge floral landscape. Some flowers are blossoming; some wilting, others dying, much as I, you, everybody has moments in their life that are good, bad and ugly. Of particular interest are the dying lilies (funereal symbols, themselves, of renewal) that evoke the shape of a swastika. You can find them in the lower left corner and at centre right where a bluebird hovers over one. Whilst these specific lilies do actually make this shape when wilting, their inclusion in a floral, abstracted landscape called ‘America’ is telling. They inject, in all this effusive dash and brio, a sombre reminder of the actual America Marc lives in. One which only this week had its Capitol breached by a mob, spurred on by none other than its very own President, with many sporting antisemitic clothing and tattoos. The flowers of America have it all: fantasy, terror, life and death. It’s a carpet woven by the ghosts of the past and, sadly, the demons of the present.
America, 2019, oil on linen, 68 x 84 inches
CHAPTER IV: THE PROMISE OF HAPPINESS

There's slaughter in the air
Protest on the wind
Someone else inside me
Someone could get skinned, how?
(My, my) someone fetch a priest
You can't say no to the beauty and the beast


It was Stendhal who in 1822 wrote that “Beauty is no more than the promise of happiness.” He, of course, would lend his name to a psychosomatic syndrome that caused palpitations and hallucinations when those suffering from it came into contact with phenomena of great beauty. Like any artist, Marc’s intention is to create objects of beauty; to dazzle, entertain and seduce with his explosions of colour and uncanny ability to faithfully represent. However, he also wants to subvert that beauty with the rhythms of life. Life that, as we know all too well, has recently been plagued by aeques both viral and political. I am reminded of Édouard Manet’s final years, spent in bed, dying from syphilis, painting posies. Some of the most delectable paintings of flowers in the history of art, that would have had Stendhal reaching for the smelling salts, and yet which Manet executed out of sheer agony.

For Marc, beauty cannot and does not operate in isolation. Just as ego needs id, yin requires yang; just as life will surely turn into death, beauty needs its beast. Those apocalyptic beasts of war, famine, discrimination and
plagues. The shit you read about in The Bible but which we’ve all lived through in 2020. Marc wants to take that dark varnish and brush it all over beauty. All over his flowers, his Disney bluebirds, his happy, rich art collectors sporting Andy Warhol ‘Gun’ tattoos and his menagerie of birds.

Just like flowers, birds, too, shift symbolically dependent upon which lens you view them through. Think of Alfred Hitchcock’s murder of crows or conspiracy of ravens in his 1963 masterpiece, The Birds. Now think of that lanky, loveable, sunny big bird from Sesame Street. The two Signs could not transform into more different Signifiers. Now take a look at Through the Never (Self-Portrait as a Hassid) (2020). Marc depicts himself as a Hasidic Jew (he is actually an Ashkenazi Jew), rather curiously jumping in the air above the ocean; his carefree mien at odds with his purported orthodoxy which has, in turn, seen him lose his shtreimel as he screams into the sky. This floating pose, evoking Robert Longo’s Men in the Cities, is ambiguous. Is his athletic state the result of ecstasy or of terror? “Through the Never” quotes Metallica’s song of the same name from 1991; imagining a space or time where "All that is, was and will be/ Universe, much too big to see". Where the ever-twisting whirlwind of experience disturbs thoughts, limits understanding and so one “… must go/ On through the never” to find the matter and meaning we all need in our lives: “Gazing up to the breeze of the Heavens/ On a quest, meaning, reason”.

Marc is thus in a tornado of self-discovery, with that journey and that singularity of expression and fulfilment either plagued or blessed by a bouquet of hummingbirds. Yes, that is the collective noun for those beautiful, iridescent birds. Clever, Mr. Dennis. The birds glimmer and sparkle, toil and struggle, just as Marc’s flowers recount fables of fortune and parables of pain. Just as here, suspended between joy and jeopardy, Marc strives to understand what, why and who he is in a never-ending pursuit of beastly beauty, searching for those temples of happiness. Selfhood infiltrating everything.
Through the Never (Self-Portrait as a Hassid), 2020, oil on linen, 65 x 44 inches
CHAPTER V:  
THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAIL

“We live in a world where there is more and more information, and less and less meaning.”


The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (2019) in many ways neatly summarises all of the previous chapters. The composition operates as a conflict between a light, chromatic centre squeezed by a dark, umbral periphery. Flowers, birds and fruits congregate together, their amplified, urgent tessellation tightly stitched like a medieval tapestry. Content ebbs between hope and fear; between life and death, in keeping with the Vanitas vernacular keenly registered in his body of work. The painting is beautiful, exotic, exuberant, yet remains tinged with a mauve melancholy. One that seems to separate, not connect the birds with the flowers; the background with the foreground; the light with the dark. An elemental segregation that dissects beauty from the beasts and allows us to contemplate both individually but within the same frame.
What we are yet to muse over is the absolutely extraordinary faculty of Marc as a painter. His ability to paint or draw what he sees is, at times, almost hard to believe. Marc seems able to describe every single feather of his birds, every single petal of his flowers. It is with this unique faculty that he teases his viewer into false states of security. We think we’re going to be treated to a bouquet of flowers, but then we realise we’re not. This hyperreality beguiles, much like Adam and Eve were seduced by the Serpent to take the forbidden apple from the tree and eat it. That apple is nestled in the lower left corner of this composition. Simultaneously a little devil and a little detail.

As Baudrillard suggests above, Marc’s hyperbolic condensations of colour, content and, above all else, acutely detailed component, doesn’t so much provide a topography of meaning as it does unveil a kaleidoscopic landscape teeming with imagery. And possibility. The job of the viewer is to slowly unpick the myriad of flora and fauna embedded in Marc’s lava flow of creativity and try to grasp some semblance of meaning out of this avalanche of detail.

The devil is in the detail because Marc deliberately hides it from the viewer. That devil is not always the meaning of the matter or the matter of the meaning, but it is often the key that unlocks his painting. However, as we have discussed before, Marc likes to break the rules and indulge in a little self-flagellation from time to time. Such acuity and accuracy should serve to explain, to bring to life his narrative, yet Marc employs it to irritate, agitate and obfuscate, unearthing instead a different truth from that which the viewer was preparing themselves for. It’s only upon lengthy contemplation of Marc’s works that you suddenly see the real truth. Find the key. Kiss the detailed devil in the pale moonlight.
The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, 2019, oil on linen, 56 x 44 inches
CHAPTER VI:
KEEP LOOKING UP, THAT’S THE SECRET OF LIFE

“The greatest pleasure does not consist in experiencing new things, but in savouring the infinite variation of what we already know.”

Perhaps then, more than an appreciation of artistic talent; more than a celebration of one man’s eye-hand coordination; more than a love of flowers or birds; more, even, than an interrogation of the very dynamic of beauty itself, Marc’s work is actually about the art of looking. And, in turn, of being looked at. These complex, ebullient paintings ask their viewer to think hard, feel hard and look even harder at them. And him.

Marc has made a series of paintings centred on this very notion. Hyperreal paintings of people taking in famous paintings. There’s the woman with long brown hair who rather phallically interrupts Gustave Courbet’s L’origine du monde (1866, Paris, Musée d’Orsay). Then there’s the older woman, with greying dark hair held back by flower pins, who hovers over Caravaggio’s equally splayed Cupid in his Amor Vincit Omnia (1601-02, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie). Finally, there’s the Dallas Cowboys cheerleader with long flowing tresses who seems lost in Pablo Picasso’s Les demoiselles d’Avignon (1907, New York, Museum of Modern Art). Perhaps she’s enthralled by Picasso’s proto cubism. Perhaps she’s considering a career change. All of the protagonists are seen from behind, so that we, as viewers, already question the true subject of our contemplation. Is it these women or the paintings they observe or, indeed, the often amusing (and telling) correlation between the two? Gender slippage and the concomitant shift in phallic power; older women consuming younger men and a paradigmatic exploration of feminine stereotypes. All of that is snuggled deep into these paintings but, as is always the case with Marc, you have to dig deep – look long and hard – to come upon this. Marc challenges the art and act of looking. Innate to that challenge is the tacit hypocrisy of the gaze. We think we see everything, but we don’t. We think we absorb all the detail, all the messaging, all the answers, but we don’t. We can’t. That problematisation and interrogation of the gaze says much about the world we live in. Marc questions the very process we undertake when consuming art, when employing it to better understand ourselves and the world around us. Is our failure to do so the fault of the crisp image he presents, or the slippery, ambiguous indices embedded in them and which we try so very hard to wring out of them. Looking at a painting by Marc Dennis is like trying to hold water in your hands. You think you have it and then, just like that, you don’t.
I like to think of Marc as a kind of flâneur. Not unlike his hero Manet. After all, Marc is something of an urban explorer, a connoisseur of the street. An observer and one’s who’s not afraid of a velvet waistcoat or a paisley shirt. A man gifted with an incredible eye and a capacity to capture the most innocuous of details that many would ignore but which, for him, breathe life into a person, a flower or a bird. His painstaking efforts to see, hold and then articulate such minutiae of detail gives form to an invisible foreground. That physical, spatial and conceptual limin that both opens up and closes his compositions. One we think we see, but which we don’t, unless forced to. It’s in this sense that, like the problematic dynamic of the gaze, Marc sees the act of painting as a series of trials; of medium, faculty, design and process. But it also needs to absorb and reflect the tribulations of the world around him. So it is that Marc’s almost anal cataloguing of details can be seen as the DNA of his art. A maximalist exuberance; a cosmic interjaculation of billions of bits of self with billions of bytes of other.
Triumph of the Human Ego, 2019, oil on linen, 60 x 46 inches
CHAPTER VII:
MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL …

“I used to be Snow White, but I drifted.”

*Mae West* (1938).

Marc’s exhibition displays five women, all entangled in his vortices of flora and fauna. There’s the Lakota Tribeswoman, Akicita (2019), pestered and pleased by an array of flowers and birds, her mouth covered by a painted handprint (eloquently drawing attention to the difficult narratives experienced by such Plains Indian Tribes). Then there’s the Art Collector (2020), resplendent in a jade dress that looks avant garde and yet could have been a costume from *Gone With The Wind* (1939). She is sat, demure yet sensual, in an endless field of yellow flowers. There’s the Black woman, trying to relax in a phosphorescent-pink wood, but is somewhat discombobulated by wolves, foxes, deer, rabbits and the usual litany of birds in *Welcome to Paradise in a Beautiful World* (2019-20). A world that pits predator against prey. Our beautiful but antagonistic world. We’ve already discussed our supine friend with the long tresses in *Memento Mori* (2018) which leaves us with just one more woman to meet. That is the chief protagonist of *He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not (The Transfiguration of Snow White)* (2019). And she is the key that unlocks the entire landscape of meaning undulating across Marc’s exhibition.
As previously considered, notions and paradigms of selfhood are manifested in this exhibition in a number of different designs and strategies. For Marc, understanding himself, as a person and a painter, is an ineluctable part of his process and enterprise. The volatility of composition, colour and imagery; of politics and this pandemic; of loves won and lost – all of that energy feeds the complexity of his surfaces and the conflict of their Signification. The binaries, dichotomies, contradictions – all of that fuels Marc’s slippery interpretation of what self means; of how it can be made manifest. If anything, this exhibition is Marc’s confession. Maybe for sins known only to him. Maybe not. Maybe we love him. Maybe we don’t.

Marc’s boyhood obsession with animation and, particularly, old Disney cartoons, has stayed with him into adulthood. Peppered within Disney’s canon and, of course, within the fairy tale vocabulary are Princesses. Young women who symbolise perfection, attraction and innocence. This figure – physically and conceptually – becomes the most important motif within the exhibition given that it is the delta for all the tributaries of Signification that flow in and around these works. The Princess embodies beauty, often snared; she epitomises hope over fear, light over darkness; she even personifies the fabric of the Vanitas – hers being a beauty that will, of course, eventually pass. In He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not ... Mark calls upon the Pre-Raphaelite Sir John Everett Millais’ Ophelia (1852, London, Tate Britain) to help him fashion his Princess. It’s a painting that sizzles with sexuality and sensuality; with love and despair. Dressed in a paisley dress, surrounded by a coterie of cute forest animals (the species of which would grace any Disney cartoon), this Princess throbs with life and love (as indicated in the Keith Haring heart tattooed on her left arm) but is also confronted by her inexorable meeting with the end, as indicated by the skull drawn next to that heart on her arm. In repose, both inside and outside the boundaries of Marc’s painting and gesture, this Princess quietly contemplates the beauty of her rich and textured life. Autumnal hues of red and green note Marc’s palette of renewal and reincarnation, further pointing to the ultimate transformation of that other Princess, Ophelia’s final change from life to death in Millais’ masterpiece.
Given that this exhibition is ultimately a show about looking and, specifically, the artist looking for himself, then it makes perfect sense that this Princess – like all the women in this show – are curious, hybridised self-portraits. Griffins of Marc’s past loves, lusts and relationships that empower him to look in and paint out. To try to understand what it means to be him by placing himself in the body of a woman – several women simultaneously known or yearned for, purposefully posed so inconsistently with and challenged by environments teeming with facts, fantasies, fictions and flashbacks. Marc’s Princesses are alter-egos, searching for the truth in the woods that his Hassid ‘self’ also seeks to find in the Never.
Akicita (Aah kee chee tah), Warrior, 2019, oil on linen, 69 x 54 inches
Art Collector, 2020, oil on linen, 52 x 40 inches
He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not, (The Transfiguration of Snow White), 2019, oil on linen, 56 x 74 inches
EPILOGUE:
A COLLAGE OF MEMORIES

Marc’s extraordinary exhibition is, then, a multifaceted, multilaminated exploration into the vicissitudes of self. Some light, some dark. How self can mutate just like this virus that so plagues us all right now. Never fixed, endlessly flowing, self is always shifting. And that’s because self isn’t just flesh and bones. It’s a tapestry of moods, moments and memories. Of loves lost, of art made or experienced, of woods raced through, of animals spied upon, of films enjoyed over and over again. Of the joy of fatherhood; of the recollections of childhood; of the fear of today; of the hope for tomorrow. All of this swirls around like an eddy in Marc’s exhibition, constantly retuning the thrust of one Sign over another. The result is a body of work, immersed in politics, heritage, religion, psychoanalysis and artistic process, that is simply and utterly mesmerising. Ravishing to the eye, mind and, indeed, the heart. A collage of memories, cut and pasted, that becomes a comfort blanket and which reminds us all that life isn’t just about hanging around waiting for the flowers to wilt or the birds to fly away. Life is about living your fucking life. Life is about love and beauty and hope and endeavour. Life is about the exuberance of the moment, grabbing opportunity by the balls. Just like Lorenna did. Just like Marc does. And, boy, do we need to be reminded of that these days.

The end.
Lover’s Sabbath, 2018, oil on linen, 58 x 57 inches, $45,000

Memento Mori, 2018, oil on linen, 32 x 34 inches, $30,000

America, 2019, oil on linen, 68 x 84 inches, $80,000

Through the Never (Self-Portrait as a Hassid), 2020, oil on linen, 65 x 44 inches, $60,000

The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, 2019, oil on linen, 56 x 44 inches, $40,000

Triumph of the Human Ego, 2019, oil on linen, 60 x 46 inches, $40,000

Akicita (Aah kee chee tah), Warrior, 2019, oil on linen, 69 x 54 inches, $70,000

Art Collector, 2020, oil on linen, 52 x 40 inches, $40,000

Welcome to Paradise in a Beautiful World, 2019-20, oil on linen, 60 x 46 inches, $50,000

He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not, (The Transfiguration of Snow White), 2019, oil on linen, 56 x 74 inches, $70,000

Installation photography credit: Anthony Rathbun