



Lydia Baker: *In Between*
April 22, 2022 - May 28, 2022

Massey Klein Gallery is pleased to present *In Between*, a solo exhibition of new drawings by Lydia Baker. The exhibition will be on view from April 22nd through May 28th. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, April 23 from 4-7pm. This is the artist's first exhibition with the gallery. For press inquiries or questions regarding works available, please email info@masseyklein.com.

The ten drawings featured in *In Between* depict the passage of time in every essence. They are pictorial representations of passing seconds, changing seasons, shifting temperatures, phases of the menstrual cycle - a tribute to different ways of marking time and an exploration of the ebb and flow of balance and harmony. They are images of an 'in-between existence,' one that hovers halfway between a physical and spiritual women-centered world. Collectively they present a matriarchal world where the unlikely occurs and past, false ideals are confronted with present, real versions of self.

Each drawing features a landscape that references the female reproductive system. The fluid and feminine forms adapt and plant themselves firmly within the compositions, representative of a restorative environment after conflict, one that is ripe for new growth and possibility. The hourglass motif and the pour streams are a nod to the artists of the Hudson River School and their interest in mortality and passing time, while the abstracted figurative compositions and body parts are reminiscent of Agnes Pelton and Georgia O' Keeffe. Baker's drawings are rife with symbolic color and temperature, both maintaining an overall moodiness while playfully contributing to a pleasant union of opposites. Browns and blues calmly reaffirm balance lost from the presence of intense reds that contradict the hopeful freshness of greens. Mimicking changing seasons, fluctuating basal body temperature and hours shifting from day to night, Baker's transitional palettes are a distinctive and vital component of her exploration of constructive escapism.

With her ideas often conceptualized during meditation and rooted in dreams, Baker works intuitively and purposefully, creating sketches and color studies before executing the final composition, allowing both herself and her viewers to "[savor] the landscape and the pendulum between curiosity and stability." She follows the flow of the composition so each work remains loosely planned and open for spontaneous change. Surrealist in nature, Baker's drawings abandon the traditional rules for depth and saturation.

Baker's deliberate choice of materials (colored pencils on paper) are used to achieve two artistic goals. The first is relatability, the artist's drawings are personal and unique, meant to evoke one's own adolescent memories of drawing. The second is to challenge the perception that drawings are preliminary studies for paintings. Buttressed by her mastery of color development, her labor-intensive technique and the high quality of the pigments used in her mark making, the artist initiates a compelling conversation on the misconceptions of material hierarchy of the art world.

Lydia Baker graduated with a BFA in Communication Arts & Design from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2013 and with an MFA in Painting from the New York Academy of Arts in 2020. She has participated in numerous artist residencies, including the Women's Artist Residency for Transcendental Awareness in Seneca Forest, WV (2013), The Artist Teaching Residency at The Grier School in Tyrone, PA (2019), the High Line Nine x Sugarlift Artist Residency (2021) and the Saltonstall Foundation Residency Program in Ithaca, NY (2021).

Her work has been featured in several print and online publications, including Juxtapoz Magazine, Artsy.com, Art Maze Magazine, New American Paintings and Artsin Square. Baker was awarded the New York Academy of Art Merit Scholar Award (2018/19), the IEA Art Heals Grant (2020), the New York Foundation for the Arts City Artist Corps Grant (2021) and, in her final year at NYAA, the Post-Graduate Chubb Fellowship (2020/21). Last December, she was selected to show in both the Chubb Insurance booth and the NYAA booth at the 2021 editions of Art Basel Miami and Art Miami, respectively. Recent exhibitions include Exit Point, Sugarlift Gallery, New York, NY (2021); and CHARTA, Fortnight Institute, New York, NY (2022). The artist lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Massey Klein Gallery is located at 124 Forsyth St. New York, NY 10002. Gallery hours are Thursday - Sunday 12pm-5pm. To schedule a private viewing, email info@masseyklein.com.