



Zachary Sitrin: Theme Song

December 9, 2022 - January 28, 2023

Massey Klein Gallery is pleased to present *Theme Song* a solo exhibition of new and recent paintings by Zachary Sitrin. The exhibition will be on view from December 9th through January 28th. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, December 10th from 4-7pm. This is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery. For press inquiries or questions regarding works available, please email info@masseyklein.com.

The paintings in *Theme Song* are fictional and poetic versions of Zachary Sitrin's personal history. Grounded in figuration, his paintings approach aesthetic values of expressionism and abstraction, bolstered by the artist's observational experience, echoing memories and unfolding fantasies. They live on the edge of abstraction, hovering somewhere between reality and fantasy, between coherence and incoherence, filled with figures imbued with uncertainty and inseparability that mirror their surroundings. Realized through various paths of discovery and evolving over time, Sitrin's paintings rely on risk taking. His works remain open to interpretation, resisting the temptation to become fully identifiable and homogenized and rather existing as venues for intuition and improvisation both for the artist and the viewer.

Sitrin's paintings are fantastical amalgamations of a multigenerational tangle of misremembered family stories, Jewish folklore, queer consciousness, and personal memories and observations. Because memory is the main source of reference for the artist, told and retold stories provide the intuitive narrative backbone for his paintings. These memories, distilled, wrung-out of opacity and left luminously transparent, are personified through male and female forms, embodied through fractured and fleshy apparitions. Some are ecstatic, charged with movement in energetic dance, while others are weightless and acrobatic. At times these figures merge and link like gears while at other times they independently break out of the environments they occupy. Without exception, however, the edges of Sitrin's figures shift and blend, refusing to confirm or deny any version of interpretation.

Sitrin resists the urge to plan his works and instead chooses to be fully present and trusting in the moments of creation. Without preparatory sketches, mental roadmaps, or direct visual references, the artist's large-scale oil paintings on stretched canvases come together like patchwork quilts. The artist often works with small brushes in a localized manner, allowing the whole to create and reveal itself over time. The theatrical scale of his paintings comes from his past work as a scenic artist, the large paintings, just like large illusionistic backdrops, chosen deliberately to make it difficult to see the entirety of the piece as he works. His distinct technique means that he is a participant and observer throughout the painting process, guided by gut reactions and momentary decisions rather than preconceived notions.

Zachary Sitrin graduated with a BFA in Set Design from Rutgers University in 2014 and with an MFA in Painting with a concentration in Anatomy from the New York Academy of Art in 2019. Sitrin was selected for an Altos De Chavon Teaching Residency in the Dominican Republic in 2019 and was awarded the 2020 Chubb Fellowship, with work by the artist showcased as one of six New York Academy of Art Chubb Fellows at Art Basel Miami 2021. Sitrin has previously exhibited at Sotheby's NY, Di Donna Gallery, the New York Academy of Art, Paddle8 and ArtMiami. The artist and his work have appeared in numerous publications, notably *The New York Times*, *The Hollywood Reporter* and *Shoutout LA*. Work by the artist is in the permanent collection of 21c Museum Hotels in Louisville, KY as well as various private collections in Europe and the United States. 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.