



Martine Johanna, *How to Eliminate Stress and Anxiety Through Good Housekeeping*
April 7, 2023 - May 20, 2023

Massey Klein Gallery is pleased to present *How to Eliminate Stress and Anxiety through Good Housekeeping*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by Martine Johanna. The exhibition will be on view from April 7th through May 20th. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, April 8th from 4-7pm. This is the artist's third solo exhibition with the gallery. For press inquiries or questions regarding works available, please email info@masseyklein.com.

The seven new paintings in *How to Eliminate Stress and Anxiety through Good Housekeeping* continue the artist's investigation between public perception and private self-image. The ever changing, multifaceted role of women within current society continues to be a main pillar of Johanna's work, always championing the female figure. The artist's playful yet weighty scenes focus the viewers' attention on the stark duality of reality and dreamlike escapism, igniting discussions on a complicated identity crisis of what we are in comparison to what is expected, projected, or demanded from us. Her semi-autobiographical works feature large and vivid figures that hover between surrealist abstraction and complex, mysterious narratives. Johanna's paintings explore perceptions of gender, beauty, personality and attraction, not only in relation to her own personal life, but also in relation to art history.

Part of Johanna's inspiration is drawn from childhood. Raised with a strict upbringing, the artist grew up in an environment structured by traditional gender divides, rules and roles. Cheap dime novels, TV programs and fashion magazines, much like the screens and social media channels of today, provided escape into an illusive and ethereal world filled with fairytale castles and savior princes. Johanna's female protagonists playfully exhibit the inner struggle between youthful naivety and adulthood, in an attempt to establish their own identities while trying to fit into the world around them.

For these seven new paintings, Johanna drew inspiration from Titian's *Venus with a Mirror*. Beautiful, posed and admirable in every way, we see Venus gazing into a mirror. Does she see herself through the same lens as the patriarchal society around her? Much like Titian's *Venus with a Mirror*, though in her own modern and prismatic way, Johanna's visually stimulating compositions raise questions without revealing the answers, leaving the viewer to contemplate the scenes and come to their own conclusions. Made in the artist's quintessential optimistic color spectrum, the paintings in *How to Eliminate Stress and Anxiety through Good Housekeeping* are elaborate and hypnotizing. Drawing direct inspiration from classic 1970's color schemes, technicolor television and Fauvism, the artist first paints a dark ground on the linen or panel and then layers with rich colors, brighter hues and neon.

Martine Johanna studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Arnhem, Netherlands, where she completed both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees. She recently participated in a residency with The Jaunt in Gothenburg, Sweden (7-12 December 2022), during which she produced an exclusive print. Johanna has exhibited internationally, including exhibitions at commercial galleries in Amsterdam, San Francisco, New York, Aalborg, Los Angeles and San Diego, and has participated in exhibitions at cultural institutions including the Mesa Arts Museum in Arizona and Collectie de Groen in Arnhem. The artist has had two previous solo exhibitions with Massey Klein Gallery: *Balancing Act*, on view from 11 September through 24 October 2020, and *Life is But A Dream*, on view from 12 October through 11 November 2018. Johanna's work resides in private collections internationally. The artist currently lives and works in Zetten, Netherlands.