

# HESSE FLATOW

## **Kirsten Deirup: *Hyper Pastoral***

September 9 - October 9, 2021

Reception: September 9: 6-8 PM

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Hesse Flatow is pleased to present *Hyper Pastoral*, a solo exhibition by New York-based painter Kirsten Deirup. For the exhibition, which includes fourteen new works in oil on linen, Deirup expands upon her years-long rumination on the idea of the pastoral into the hyper-pastoral, creating works depicting an amplified version of idealized country life. *Hyper Pastoral* marks Deirup's first New York solo show since 2008, and her first with the gallery.



Culling inspiration from early Renaissance paintings and the work of the Hudson River School artists, Deirup seamlessly merges fact and fiction, history and present-day in her paintings. Her surreal vignettes challenge traditions of still life, portrait, and landscape painting with the introduction of contemporary symbols of industry and consumerism, commenting on the climate crisis and its spiritual effect on humanity. Rendered with a precise, painterly technique, her works are constructed like the setting of the stage, where the intricacies and vivacity of nature are flattened into static backdrops disrupted by out-of-place activities in the foreground. Deirup explains: "I'm trying to reconcile that romantic, idealistic view of natural beauty with what we, as humans, are actually doing to the environment. I don't mean them to be environmentalist in a pedantic way, but it is something I'm always ruminating on."

The carefully-rendered paintings presented in *Hyper Pastoral* hang suspended in a moment where the metaphysical infiltrates the real world. Presented together, the resulting canvases — while recognizable and familiar in some ways — act as a window into an uncanny and subversive world where utilitarian blue tarps are transformed into towering monoliths and crushed soda cans and gold chains are tucked in amongst more conventional still life subjects. Crafted in the way a novelist builds a narrative, the works on view include recurring characters and motifs: the draped blue tarp, which specifically recalls Bruegel's Tower of Babel and the religious icon of Madonna and child, as well as humanoid, bodiless hands presenting various subjects in the foreground. While Deirup's world shows evidence of human existence, it is void of confirmation. With a grey parrot as the only subject that gazes back at viewers, this body of work compels viewers to contemplate a version of the world without our own species.

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**Kirsten Deirup** (b. 1980, Berkeley, CA) attended The Cooper Union, New York, NY. She has had solo exhibitions at de boer gallery, Los Angeles, CA; Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, New York, NY; Guild and Greyschul, New York, NY; and Rare, New York, NY. Group exhibitions include; Morgan Lehman Gallery, New York, NY; Jeff Bailey Gallery, New York, NY; Marc Wolf Contemporary Art, San Francisco, CA; Geoffrey Young Gallery, Great Barrington, MA; and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles, CA.