



GILLIAN JASON GALLERY

MODERN & CONTEMPORARY ART BY WOMEN

Megan Baker

**I See You in the Clouds,
You Move with the Wind**

5th October - 11th November 2023

The Clouds that Whisper (2023), by Megan Baker

Megan Baker: I See You in the Clouds, You Move with the Wind

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Megan Baker's practice is concerned with our understanding and perception of time in the fast-paced society in which we live. Particularly interested in deconstructing the way in which time unfolds through painting, the artist makes use of the physicality of oil paint itself to prompt the viewer to seek moments of stillness and tranquility in the contemplation of art.

Baker's paintings locate themselves in an in-between state, vibrate and shift; they exist in the space between forming and dissolving, so that the pictorial surface does not coalesce or feel complete, but rather continually oscillates between the two. Gazing at Baker's abstract-figurative canvases, the perception of time shifts and evolves as one is absorbed by the search and discovery of the next hidden detail.

In her previous solo exhibition 'Where the Ground Meets the Sky' (2022), such an artistic enquiry was approached from the perspective of landscape and memory. Echoing the flourishing hills of the British countryside, Baker put us in touch with someplace else, somewhere unknown but still relatable in a subjective way, each viewer uniquely perceiving a world whilst lost in private contemplation.

Today, in 'I See You in the Clouds, You Move with the Wind', Baker continues to pursue this research by looking back on the Old Masters. Specifically, the artist uses Titian's 'Bacchus and Ariadne' (1520-23) as a point of reference for the exploration of temporality in art history. The Renaissance work is in fact presented as past, present and future. Ariadne is captured in the present, but mid turn from her past as Theseus sails off over her left shoulder as she is abandoned on the island of Naxos. Simultaneously, she is also about to look towards a moment in the future, as Bacchus is leaping from his chariot.

Baker reworks the multiple timelines showcased in Titian's masterpiece by abstracting and blending all scenes into one, fragmenting and distorting this linearity of time. The artist disrupts the chronology of the passage and depicts it in an ever-fleeting, ephemeral way. "I don't think time is ever fixed to a certain point but moves in a similar way to the way that clouds form in the sky. In addition, the way painting is suspended, an image comes together until it disperses apart again, this too will fade, return back into the unknown, fall into the abyss, to know that it will never be as it once was." (Megan Baker)

Baker brings art historical references into contemporary painting, breaking down and recreating Titian's compositions and colours with a new aesthetic. Yet, such a revisitation of the Renaissance work goes beyond the purely visual realm and is used as an expedient to investigate the way in which we receive images today. Looking closely at the placement of Ariadne's hand on the sky, one can see how the illusion of depth is broken down, transforming a realistic landscape into a stage-like construction. This composition is recreated in modern cinematography in Peter Weir's movie 'The Truman Show' (1998). Towards the end of the film, in fact, Truman Burbank crashes into the parameters of his existence, touching his sky in the realisation that it is only a façade (see page 2).

With this parallelism, Baker further investigates the relationship between the perception of time and our experience of images, with painting on the one hand and mass-media on the other: "Through the use of social media and technology we have become audience members to our own lives. It feels like we have become conditioned to capture everything out of fear of forgetting, but once we look back on our lives all we will have is a collection of deferred experiences. I hope that painting can be the antidote to that, it is present, and through this work I hope to expand and extend moments in time rather than condensing and flattening them down." (Megan Baker)

About Megan Baker

Baker appears in international private collections across the UK, USA, Europe and Qatar. Born in the UK (1996), Baker graduated from the prominent school Central Saint Martins in 2018, when she received the Kate Barton Painting Award and the Cass Art Prize. Baker is currently shortlisted for the Young Masters Art Prize (2023) and has been previously shortlisted for the Clyde and Co Art Award (2019) and also came runner up at the Hix Art Award (2019). Between 2022 and 2023, the artist was exhibited at Eye of the Collector art fair in collaboration with Christie's Auction House, was part of the international show 'Homecoming' at Sharon Golan Art Projects in Tel Aviv, and took part in five group exhibitions.



Bacchus and Ariadne (1520-3) by Titian
oil on canvas
176.5 x 191 cm

© National Portrait Gallery



The Truman Show (1998),
directed by Peter Weir

Yesterday Decays Into Hopes of Tomorrow, 2023
oil on canvas
140 x 130 cm

£ 9,250



This Weightlessness is a Heavy Load to Carry (II), 2023
oil on canvas
90 x 80 cm

£ 6,750



I Put You to Rest With the Setting of the Sun, 2023
oil on canvas
155 x 145 cm

£ 12,500



The Rhythms of the Blue, 2023
oil on canvas
60 x 50 cm

£ 4,750



There is Only One Thing I Know to be True, 2023
oil on canvas
140 x 130 cm

NFS



The Wind That Carries You, 2023
oil on canvas
160 x 150 cm

NFS



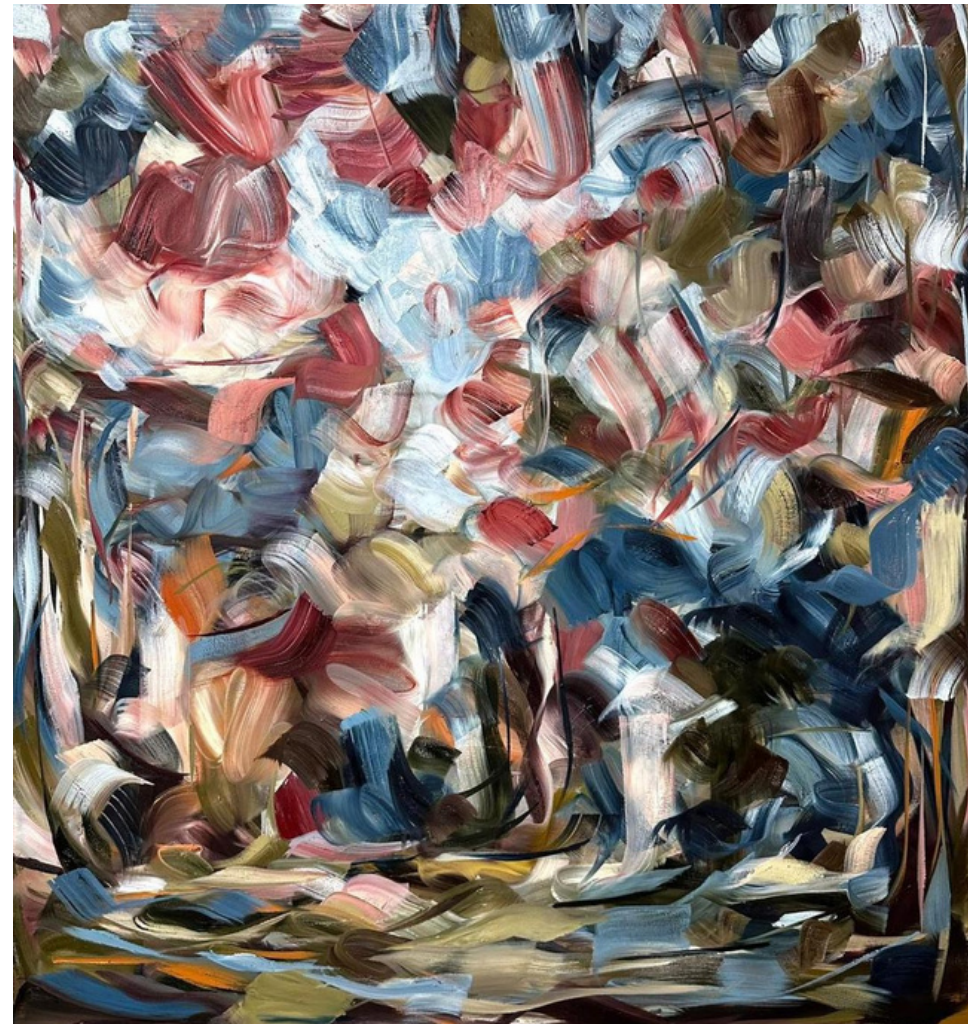
The Petals That Fall 2023
oil on canvas
140 x 130 cm

NFS



I Hold You in My Dreams, Awake and You Disappear, 2023
oil on canvas
140 x 130 cm

NFS



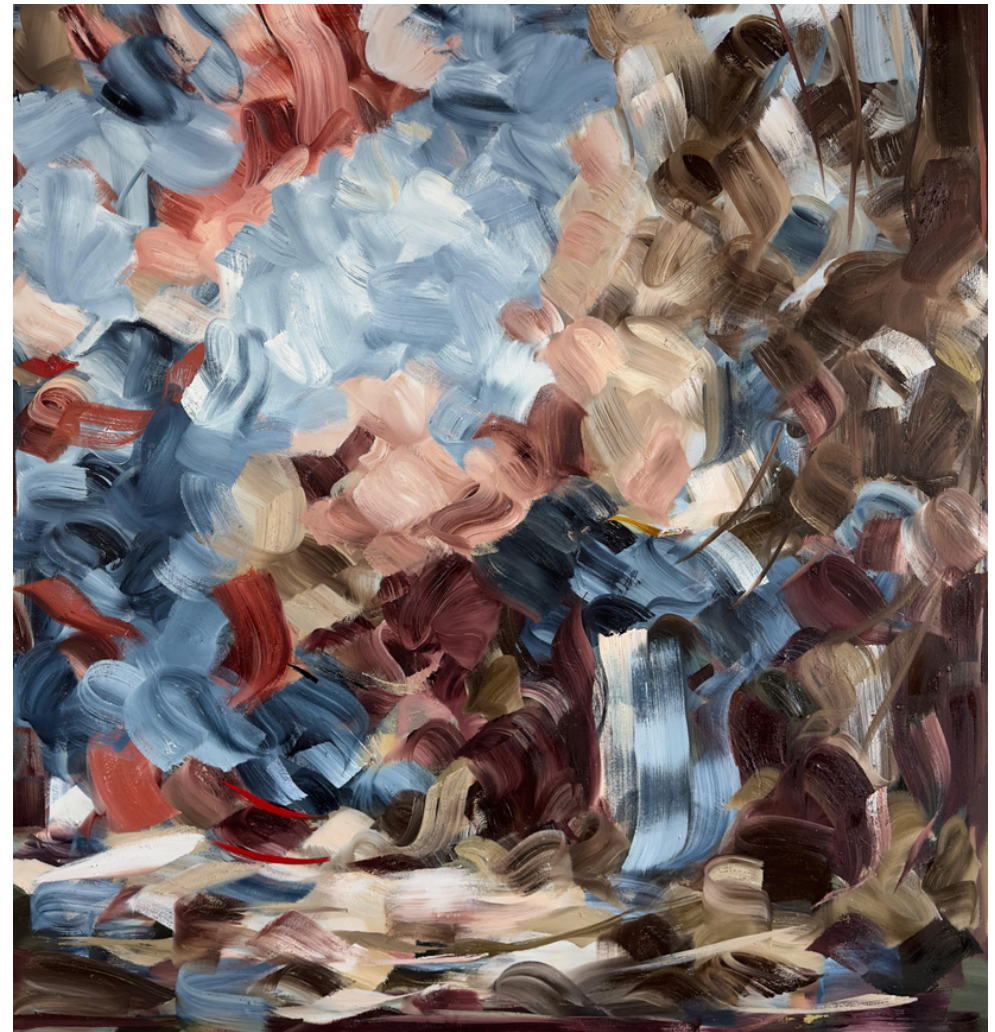
Good Afternoon, Good Evening and Goodnight, 2023
oil on canvas
190 x 200 cm

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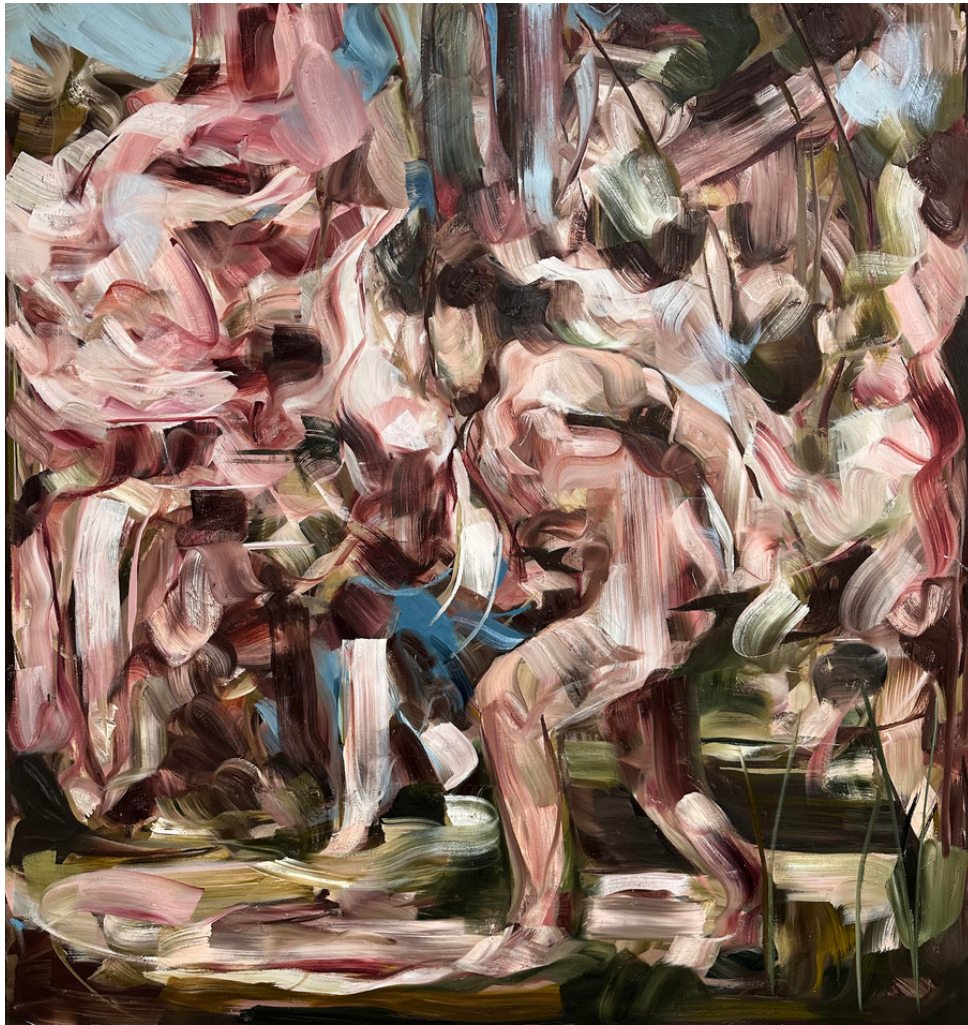
The Clouds that Whisper, 2023
oil on canvas
140 x 130 cm

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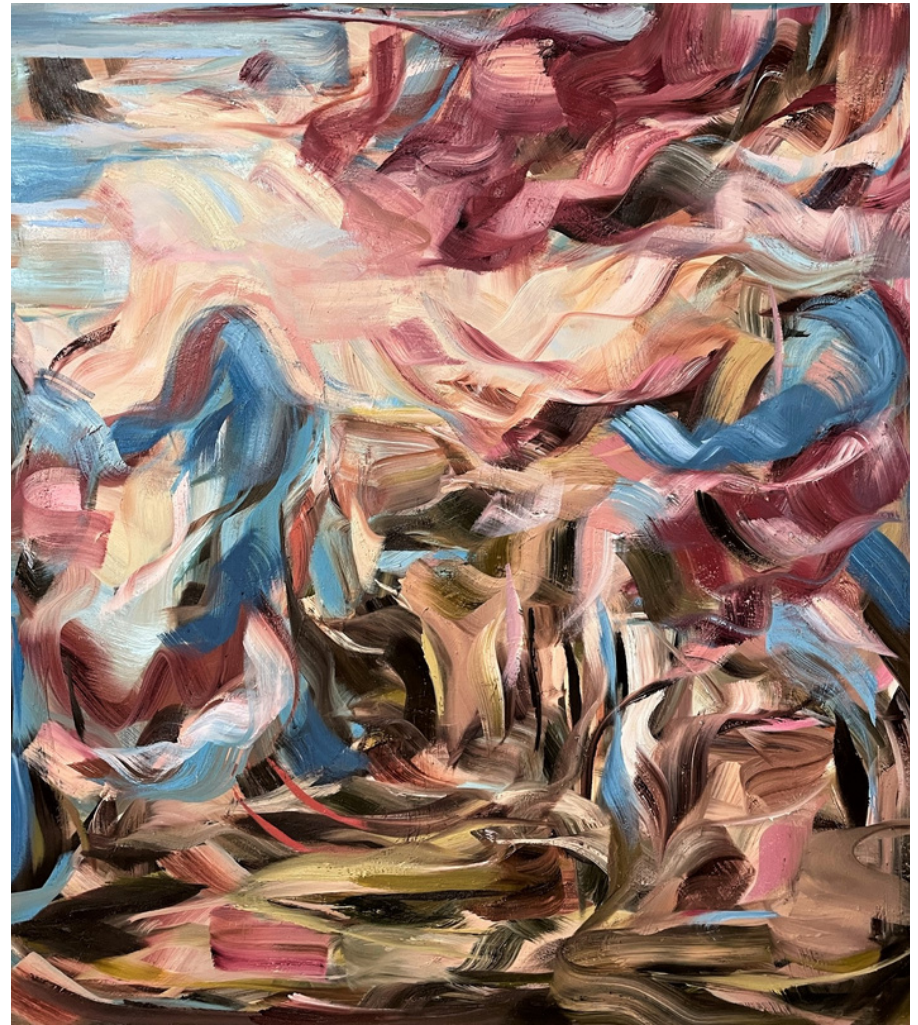
To Watch as the World Goes by, 2023
oil on canvas
160 x 150 cm

NFS



Something in the Air 2023
oil on canvas
120 x 110 cm

NFS



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