

# BOB'S

## Second Hand

*Maya Strauss*

March 15th - April 7th, 2024

Opening reception: March 15th, 6-9pm

Gallery Hours: Sundays 1- 5pm

Maya Strauss creates without rules. Paintings, drawings, ceramics, found objects: these are not separate disciplines, rather, different textures and tools to evoke the artist's charged observations. Strauss's work isolates the ordinary. From the blur of little moments that tunnel around us in the rush and hustle of daily life, Strauss lifts and points to items and images that become remarkable. In the playful arrangements of *Second Hand*, we're afforded a cross-section of the free-associative, the meditative, and the strange.

In her intuition-based process, Strauss channels unnameable responses to fragments of her surroundings: phone-snapped pictures, a random trinket, or the view from her window. In relaying these sparks in paint, or clay, Strauss attempts to recapture the magic she glimpsed in the first place. But again, it's unnameable. It's our job to explore what these re-represented snippets may mean to us. It's also a pleasure.

The color, the tactility, the textures evoke the intrigue, whimsy, and mystery of her raw vision. The insistent lack of flatness in her glob-stocked canvases – even the warp and deckle of her paint-laden paper – are invitations to get up close.

The paintings on clothes and objects offer a helpful distillation. So many objects, gifted or thrifted, pass through our homes and hands. Strauss paints on these things, not as a portrait of an owner or wearer, but as matter with a life of its own: from its manufacture decades ago, to any number of shoulders it draped over, to the consignment shop where the artist encountered it. In painting onto these well-lived surfaces, Strauss presents the object as witness.

The stacked pallets of Strauss's knick-knacks and hand-made sculptures act as a reliquary of its own. The latticed lumber makes equal space for anonymous tchotchkes and the artist's creations, forcing us to recontextualise her handiwork and her fanciful taste. What does it mean to see a broom head next to one of Strauss's delicate ceramic plates? It's an equation of humility, accentuated by the pallet's rough utility, and its plain placement on the floor. In turn, the work asks us to humble ourselves, bringing us to our knees, where we are rewarded by the sight of items tucked within the inner space. More secrets, more ruminations.

Like the entirety of the show, this work is both grounded and grounding.

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