

Alessandro Albanese

Of the Surface of Things

Solo show by Asher Liftin

Opening December 17, 6:30pm

From December 17, 2022 until January 30, 2023

Alessandro Albanese Gallery

Via XX Settembre 25, 75100 Matera

Asher Liftin (New York, 1998) returns to Alessandro Albanese Gallery, after his first solo international exhibition in Milan. This time the artist elaborates a new exhibition project curated by Anna Vittoria Magagna, which will open on December 17, 2022 in the Matera venue.

The title of the exhibition *Of the Surface of Things* comes from the poem by Wallace Stevens, in which the poet reflects on the observation of the world and “the surface of things”, to literally quote the title, in two ways by reality and imagination, a dualism at the center of Liftin's research. The poet metaphorically dresses himself in the cloak of imagination, obscuring the real world and seeing the elements of nature appearing in different colors. From this awareness of renewed representation, Liftin's figures emerge with a visual search with a broad index: as photographs found or taken personally by the artist and from media icons, such as television or film. The works in the exhibition emphasize their provenance by repurposing the textures of digital photography in painting, similar to fragments of pixels, or bright film filters.

Subjects are often simple and familiar, reworked digitally, and stripped of their iconographic references to transition into painting. Such example of figure is visible in the *Torso in Torque* which is a late nude by Picabia; in the *Still Life of Fruit and Pistachios*, whom subject is a photograph by the artist; and in *Flower in Turcato*, in which the still life is circumscribed within a gestural trace on the canvas. Gesture plays protagonist again in the diptych *The Conformist*, in which the image from Bertolucci's film is overlaid with a grid, imitating a sketch drawn, perhaps by the letter carrier, on a package delivered to the artist to erase his address. Asher Litin focuses on synthesizing visual stimuli as information, concepts and knowledge. *Of the Surface of Things* creates a forest of heterogeneous signs in constant tension between imagination and reality, in which the relationship among image, symbol, and gesture are lenses of the world. In this sense imagination becomes a tool of knowledge, and art the space of questioning our reality.

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ARTIST BIO

Asher Liftin (b. New York, 1998). He lives and works in New York City.

Asher Liftin's work explores themes of perception, digital media, film and the history of painting. Liftin is a double major, studying cognitive science and visual arts at Yale University (2021). This particular training has encouraged a deep search for connection between scientific processes on visual perception and image making. Liftin's work has been exhibited at The Museum of Contemporary Art Westport and in galleries in New York City, such as Palo Gallery and Sour Mouse Gallery, and in New Haven, in galleries such as The Aisling Gallery at The Study.

Alessandro Albanese Gallery hosted his first international solo show *Blow Up* in Milan, and he is returning with a new exhibition project *Of the Surface of Things* at its Matera location.