

HASHIMOTO CONTEMPORARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Still Summer

A solo exhibition by Rachel Gregor

11 November - 02 December, 2023

LOS ANGELES—The rules of adolescent girlhood are convoluted and often unspoken, something painter Rachel Gregor seeks to highlight in her first solo exhibition with Hashimoto Contemporary, *Still Summer*. The Kansas City-based painter portrays the summer before ninth grade (remembered through overexposed point-and-shoot film photos) as the tense passage into true young adulthood: newfound independence is at odds with a lack of agency, infantilization discredits budding knowledge about the world. Based on versions of herself, the characters in these new paintings are wolves in sheep's clothing, rebelling to escape their physical and psychological barriers, or at least survive the small hell of Arcadian juvenility.



Casting her female figures out on their own or clustering them uncomfortably close, Gregor creates each composition through an amalgam of tense gestures and wide-eyed glances, locating repressed memories of teenage girlhood somewhere between the mundane and the melodramatic. These relationships are not the vapid or frivolous situations patriarchal society frames them as, but deeply emotional, contradictory, and fulfilling connections that transform lifetimes. Converging the theatrical figure positioning of Rococo painter Giambattista Tiepolo with the warped narrative sensibilities of the Brönte sisters, these works depict summer as an inescapable purgatory with no respite beyond the fences, fields, or trees that encircle the figures. These girls seem to conspire against something beyond the frame, pulling the viewer into the compositions' confines so they might escape or, at the very least, commiserate.

The exhibition features several sub-series of works hinting at Gregor's autobiography, including a diptych of "poser" girls wearing t-shirts by Nu Metal bands, a genre of hardcore music popular in the mid-1990s and dominated by young angry white men. "I was very drawn to it," Gregor writes, "there was comfort in anger." The image of a small American midwestern girl in an aggressive band's shirt felt pitiful but compelling, "like a small animal backed into a corner, afraid it will have to attack." Whether nude and nymph-like or clothed and self-conscious, each girl represents a threat dismissed to provide a false sense of security, wicked misguidance wrapped in supple flesh, and an assumption of frailty. When you're 13, summer is not marked by moments of euphoria but by miserable perseverance. Despite their rage, it is *still summer*.

The exhibition opens with a reception on November 11th from 6 pm - 8 pm and is on view through December 2nd. The artist will be in attendance at the opening. For more information about the show or for exclusive content and images, please email LA@hashimotocontemporary.com.

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WHAT:

Still Summer

A solo exhibition by Rachel Gregor

WHERE:

Hashimoto Contemporary
2754 S La Cienega Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90034

WHEN:

Opening night reception: Saturday, November 11th
On view through Saturday, December 2nd

RELEVANT LINKS:

Hashimoto Contemporary: <https://www.hashimotocontemporary.com/>

Rachel Gregor: <https://www.rachelgregor.com/>

ABOUT THE GALLERY:

Hashimoto Contemporary is a contemporary art gallery originally founded in 2013 by Ken Harman Hashimoto. In 2023 the gallery announced two new partners, Dasha Matsuura and Jennifer Rizzo. Our roster consists of an eclectic blend of emerging and mid-career contemporary artists working. Hashimoto Contemporary provides a platform for artists whose identities and subjects have been historically relegated to the margins, as well as artists whose practices fit neatly into the canon of art history. You can find us at the Minnesota Street Project (San Francisco), the Lower East Side (New York City) and Culver City (Los Angeles) where our three spaces organize new exhibitions monthly.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Working in traditional paint media such as oil paint, gouache, and chalk pastel, artist Rachel Gregor (b. 1990) creates psychological portraits of young girls that tip-toe between realism and artificiality. Caught in a single moment between the mundane and the melodramatic, the figures are wide-eyed and wistful, frozen in a state somewhere between boredom and shock. In her latest body of work, the girls portrayed are encircled by their surroundings, usually backed up against a fence or isolated on a dock. The viewer stays trapped with the girls, as the expansive landscapes are often visually obstructed by a tree branch or the figure herself, preventing any visual wandering through the pictorial space. Botanical motifs are a common theme throughout Gregor's visual lexicon, a nod to her upbringing of her family owning their own horticulture nursery, as well as being a broader symbol of fragility and resilience.

Gregor lives and works in Kansas City, MO. She graduated from the Kansas City Art Institute in 2012 and has studied abroad at Studio Art Centers International in Florence, Italy. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally with solo shows in New York, Los Angeles, and Zürich, Switzerland, and group exhibition participation nationwide.