

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Walter Price
Pearl Lines

May 12 – June 18, 2022
Ground Floor

When You See a Good Move, Find a Better One reads the title of a recent work by Walter Price—as if to summarize the restless experimentation at the core of his lush, irreducible approach to painting. Price’s second solo show at Greene Naftali intensifies the brisk blend of representation and avid formalism for which he is known, creating a singular style in which figuration and abstraction cannot be cleaved apart.

This new body of work often expands Price’s dense mental landscapes to a more ambitious, near-panoramic scale, in which swathes of vibrant color give way to recurring motifs, still legible but increasingly unmoored. Contoured planes of dark pigment sport curled eyelashes that transform them into faces in silhouette, observing the picture plane; plush sofas (a symbol of interiority and comfort) dissolve at their edges or burst into flames.

“Location is as indeterminate as qualities are abundant in Price’s settings,” Darby English has written, and these latest works portray a borderless space largely governed by the action of paint itself, which Price applies to the canvas in ingenious ways and keeps moving while it’s wet. Circular skids trace the path and speed of the artist’s hand at work, and his paint-covered footprints likewise bear physical witness to his passage. Indeed, motion and mobility (in various guises) are at stake in each of the works: from the push-pull of matte and metallic colors to directional vectors of dotted line, or the preponderance of chess pieces across his canvases—objects strategically defined by how they can move. Those stray pawns, knights, and rooks (like all the imagery Price favors) are both playful and vaguely portentous: lures for the eye that also allude to more consequential theaters of conflict.

Price’s roving sensibility also extends to the viewer, whose senses and mind are urged to wander—ambiguity is cultivated in his work, but for reasons more generous than evasive. The exhibition’s title, *Pearl Lines*, underscores the centrality of drawing to his practice, evidenced in two galleries dedicated to works on panel and on paper that celebrate his skills as a draughtsman. Narrative ties seem to adhere between works but break down on close inspection; each scene is strange and self-contained, a holdout from interpretive closure. *Pearl Lines* collects these fresh attempts to bring emblem and gesture into wayward alignment, ceding resolution to pursue instead what English calls a certain “aboutness, deeply trustful of loose connection, preferred to landing.”

Walter Price lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Recent solo exhibitions include Camden Art Centre, London (2021); Greene Naftali, New York (2020); Aspen Art Museum (2019); MoMA PS1, New York (2018); and Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne (2018). His work was included in the 2019 Whitney Biennial and is currently on view in *Drawing in the Continuous Present* at The Drawing Center, New York (through May 22). Price’s work is in the collections of the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin; and Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, among others.