

# Petzel

**STEFANIE HEINZE**

***MORTAR (the cute ones shouldn't go unnoticed)***

May 3 – June 8, 2024

520 W 25th Street

*SWEET SWEET AGENCY* by Sophie Robinson

the candy here is hard & filled & there is nothing i love more  
than to be treasured. if nobody's watching i just do nothing: lie down  
don't hardly breathe, keep my face in careful stillness not to crease  
its cute forgettability. the world is full of edible munchkins & it is my life's work  
to work out how to stay creamy on the inside, how not to sour myself  
up with little nips of this or that or otherwise cut holes in myself thru which  
to be seen. i must learn to love what i cannot know: the wide bleached anus  
on a porn blog, the insane demands of toddlers, the desire for moderation or  
slimness of affection, the reasons lovers leave, the trash my cat brings back,  
the crack of footsteps in the woods at night, why the killer kills.  
i learn it all the hard way but fwiw  
i would never snap the rabbit's neck again  
i would rewind i would keep it every time

Petzel is pleased to present *MORTAR (the cute ones shouldn't go unnoticed)*, a selection of paintings by Berlin-born artist Stefanie Heinze. The show marks Heinze's second solo exhibition with the gallery, and will be on view from May 3 to June 8, 2024, at Petzel's Chelsea location at 520 West 25th Street. Following the artist's relocation from Berlin to New York this past year, Heinze's newest suite of works investigates systems of knowledge and truth, challenging received notions of representation.

Heinze considers mortar as a site of genesis, the container of beginnings, from which raw materials are processed. Mortar can be the sound of aggression, bombardment, a foil or a threat. Mortar and pestle, a receptacle for grinding ingredients, a cup for holding and crushing hard, like the grinding of teeth, or the moment infatuation becomes obsession, when yearning turns from tender to brutal. The paste which binds building blocks together, holding and distributing weight, sometimes decorative, composed of cement, water and sand. Paint is mortar, the built environment is mortar, the grind is mortar, decisions are sealed in mortar, and so is the longing for something even better and bigger and harder.

Heinze starts with small-scale drawings and collages, which are translated to large-scale tracings, undergoing several transformations as her canvases take shape. Rendering her surfaces over several months, layers of line and color are suspended in scenes at once frozen and in motion. Heinze works with a sense of suspicion, disputing the power of images. Her depictions are at times plush, like her floating, 🍌-bodied cherubs, or sharp and dense, like her reckless, airborne cinder blocks. Heinze's pictures lend expanded, fragmented associations to her subjects, both stony and swaddled, heavy and buoyant. Heinze's works negotiate categorization, neither pure figuration nor abstraction. Language hits a limit here, reaching for the means to describe—an enzyme, a digestif—where words fail. Heinze strives for a more empirical vocabulary, generating fields of sensation.

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Interested in divination practices, ranging from tarot reading to online “spiritualist” influencing, the artist creates images motivated by imagined futures, drawing on both medieval and New Age “Youtubian” utopias. Influenced by the theory of the third hand in painting, the experience of transcendence which overtakes the artist at that critical point of flow state absorption, Heinze’s leans into this tradition of mysticism. Heinze allows the pieces to reveal themselves over time, creating kinetic, shifting pictures that trip expectation. Heinze builds tender worlds, in which instinct and environment coalesce in new impossibilities.

## About Stefanie Heinze

Stefanie Heinze’s (b. 1987, Berlin, Germany) paintings display ambiguous forms that become recognizable as unexpected subjects. From disembodied body parts, to everyday objects, to animal-like figures, her subjects melt into fantastical backgrounds to create vivid visual worlds, which reveal an interplay between high and low culture.

Heinze’s brightly colored, imaginative compositions are tenderly subversive in their details and symbolism, complemented with equally lyrical titles. Pencil, ink, or ballpoint pen drawings – sometimes torn and collaged into multi-layered compositions – form a basis for Stefanie Heinze’s artistic practice, mapping for the opulent language of her paintings. Testing the fine line between abstraction and figuration, Heinze is categorically unique, as she explores new senses and possibilities of representation.

In the short time since studying at Academy of Fine Arts, Oslo (2012) and graduating from the Academy of Fine Arts in Leipzig (2016), Heinze has exhibited widely. She has had solo exhibitions at Capitain Petzel, Berlin (2022); Petzel, New York (2020); Capitain Petzel, Berlin (2019); LC Queisser, Tbilisi (2019); among others. She has participated in numerous group shows including at Le Consortium, Dijon, (2023); The Hepworth Wakefield, West Yorkshire (2022-23); Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami (2022); Boros Foundation at Berghain, Berlin (2020) Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (2020); Sammlung Philara, Düsseldorf (2019); Saatchi Gallery, London (2018); and Tanya Leighton, Berlin (2017).

Heinze has a forthcoming exhibition at the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in 2024 that will be accompanied by an extensive exhibition catalogue.

Heinze’s works are in the collections of the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Musée d’Art Moderne de Paris; MAMCO, Geneva; Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden; Pérez Art Museum, Miami; The Hepworth Wakefield, UK; Marguerite Hoffman Collection, Dallas; The Rachofsky Collection, Dallas; Mead Gallery at Warwick Arts Centre, UK; the Delfina Collection, UK; and the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Turin.

Petzel Gallery is located at 520 West 25th Street New York, NY 10001. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 AM–6:00 PM. For press inquiries, please contact Hanna Andrews at [hanna@petzel.com](mailto:hanna@petzel.com), or call (212) 680-9467.