

# Esther Schipper

**Sojourner Truth Parsons**

**Sooner or later you will call my name**

April 9 – May 30, 2026

Esther Schipper, Paris



Detail: Sojourner Truth Parsons, **Jess in a mansion**, 2026, acrylic on canvas, 152,4 x 106,7 cm (60 x 42 in) (STP 134)  
Photo © Nicholas Knight

Esther Schipper Paris is pleased to announce **Sooner or later you will call my name**, Sojourner Truth Parsons's second solo exhibition with the gallery and her first in Paris, where she will debut a suite of new paintings.

Parsons's practice ties the study of light to the desires and fantasies that color our perception of the world. Celestial bodies, flowers, and her home city's high-rises serve as anchoring forms in works that speak of a time of loss, isolation, and also resurgence. The atmospheric temperature of her environments – such as her neighborhood, her studio, or her garden – are distilled into their emotional essence. From coats of black acrylic paint, arise iridescent shapes and shimmering surfaces, painted with thin washes in acutely tactile brushstrokes.

In the new suite of paintings, the segmented order of Parsons's series **Garden paintings** collapses into an uneven tableau coated in viscous, shimmering forms in new constellations. In her early work, Parsons collaged painted canvas and linen, until she realized she could achieve similar effects with paint alone, in effect "collaging with paint" as the artist has said. This technique allows her to work without cutting; instead, she works in layers and maintains the ground as a whole. Cover, containment, and "edgeness" are both formal motifs as well as allegorical representations of states of being: "a color next to a texture next to a flatness."

The Manhattan skyline viewed from the waterfront is a recurring touchstone of Parsons's oeuvre. Towering forms, loose rectangular arrangements, and successive washes of pigment and finish convey the city's atmosphere as it encompasses everyone. In multiple works, among them **New York alone I** (2026), **New York alone II** (2026), and **It will happen to you** (2026), the connection to the outside world is anchored by a luminous round disc – either sun or moon – allowing the painting to shift between abstraction and representation at the blink of an eye. For more than a decade, Parsons has sustained a thread of her practice devoted to studying light as it touches, reflects, diffuses, and refracts.

In **Lotus I** (2026), an expanse of a near monochrome green is verdant with earthy hues shining through, a plane that appears flat and densely layered at once. Against this backdrop, Parsons applied lavender paint that appears superimposed, detached even. The contrast that dominates the composition rubs against the mood summoned by the respective hues. A similar effect is achieved by **Before spring** (2026); bringing a milky full moon and orange sunrise into the frame, **The night after she died** (2026) and **The day after she died** (2026) expand on it. In these titles surfaces the grief unleashed by a passing.

Painted in vibrant tones, another reoccurring motif are tulips (**A broken heart I** [2026], **A broken heart II** [2026], and **Jess in a mansion** [2026]). Parsons applied the paint with thick brushstrokes; the flowers have a calcareous and silk-like presence falling across the dark sometimes smokey black canvas. Here, the artist harnesses the optics of emergence in paint: the sight of wet, near-black soil and the cold touch of firm petals. A common sight in spring, also in the urban landscape of New York, her bright tulips have a psychological resonance.

The exhibition's title borrows from Louise Glück's poem **Marathon. First Goodbye** (1985): "Sooner or later you will call my name, / cry of loss, mistaken / cry of recognition, or arrested need / for someone who exists in memory: no voice / carries to that kingdom." While reading Glück's poetry, Parsons, in her own words, "realized I was falling in love with her, planted a garden in her honor, made a plaque with her name, and memorized some of her poems." Her admiration marks a parallel: akin to poetry, Parsons' paintings distill the world into revelatory moments. With great economy of means, her works capture a glance that changes us or exemplify an extended act of looking full of longing. They are painted reveries of instances of sadness, joy, and beauty.

**Sojourner Truth Parsons** was born in 1984 in Vancouver, Canada. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, Nova Scotia. The artist lives and works between the Southern Catskill Mountains and New York City.

She was artist in residence at Denniston Hill (2021), the Santa Fe Art Institute, Canada Council for the Arts International Residencies, Santa Fe (2014), Terra Nova National Park, The Rooms, Newfoundland (2014), and the Ross Creek Center for the Arts, Bay of Fundy (2009).

Solo exhibitions include: **Louise**, Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2025); **If nobody wants you you're free**, Esther Schipper, Berlin (2023); **My name is not susan.**, Foxy Production, New York (2022); **Milk river**, Various Small Fires, Seoul (2020); **Sojourner Truth Parsons: Holding Your Dog At Night**, Oakville Galleries, Oakville (2017); recent group exhibitions are: **Public Life (Drawings)**, Chris Andrews, Montreal (2023); **Downbeat**, Marian Goodman Gallery, New York (2023); **Summer '22**, Esther Schipper, Berlin (2022); **The New Bend**, curated by Legacy Russell, Hauser & Wirth, New York (2022); **L'Invitation au voyage**, Esther Schipper, Berlin (2021); **This is America**, Kunstraum Potsdam, Potsdam (2021); **This Sacred Vessel (PT. 1)**, Arsenal Contemporary, New York (2020).

Parsons' work is included in the collections of The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Museum Voorlinden, Wassenaar; The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal; Oakville Galleries, Oakville; Portland Museum of Art, Portland; McMichael Collection of Canadian Art, Kleinburg, and Long Museum, Shanghai.

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