Jack Pierson
Angel Youth

Maccarone
98 Morton Street, New York
November 4 – December 23, 2017

Neon Baltimore, from the series Angel Youth, 1990
Photo courtesy Cheim & Read, New York

“I don’t care what anyone says, photography is nostalgia.”
– Jack Pierson

Maccarone is pleased to present an exhibition of Jack Pierson’s Angel Youth series in the 98 Morton space from November 4 to December 23, 2017.

Consisting of 13 chromogenic prints mounted on archival board, the snapshot-like series, Angel Youth, pulls from a body of Pierson’s work from the early ‘90s. Highlighted in the recent publication, The Hungry Years, the photographs align the seemingly banal (Some peaches) with illusions of luxury (In Every Dreamhome a Heartache). Simultaneously evoking familiarity and distance, Pierson began his career with such grainy, amateur-like photography to create his own version of “found” photos. Sourcing generic imagery from his cross-country road trips, they seduce the viewer with a sense of voyeuristic intimacy.

While each photograph depicts specific moments or people in Pierson’s life, the personal narrative parallels a larger, historical dialogue of the American ‘90s. Fascination vignettes a hazy night-scene on 42nd Street in New York, where the artist’s studio was located at the time; a starkly ordinary façade depicts the Hollywood apartment building where Janis Joplin overdosed in A Woman Left Lonely; and in The Call Back, he casually snapped a shot of a Lucille Ball impersonator post-audition. These era-specific dichotomies of iconoclasm, desperation, and doomed glamour resonate in our contemporary disillusionment.

Each of the 13 prints are lined on the reverse with a variety of vintage posters and wallpapers, and collectively come with a trimmed, burnished, wooden portfolio case — like treasures kept in a cigar box. Therein retaining its original objecthood nearly thirty years on, Angel Youth unapologetically embodies the nostalgia of a particular Americana, and the current dismantling of its presupposed dream.

This exhibition is presented in collaboration with Cheim & Read, New York. For more information, please contact press@maccarone.net.