



Danielle McKinney, *Prophetic*, 2021, Acrylic on Canvas, 16 x 20 in., Courtesy of the Artist and Fortnight Institute, NY

EXPERIENCE THE POETIC SOLITUDE IN DANIELLE MCKINNEY'S BODY OF WORK, "SAW MY SHADOW" AT FORTNIGHT INSTITUTE, NY

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Throughout DANIELLE MCKINNEY's latest body of work, depicted subjects protrude a sense of self-assurance rather than despair through their solace. McKinney utilizes the gaze as a driving tool in her work. Subjects appear to stare into a dimensional space where only their thoughts reside, or, like the title suggests, only their own shadows do. The result is a collection of intimate portraits, where the subjects' inner thoughts become the real subjects. *Saw My Shadow* will be on view through May 15, 2021, at the Fortnight Institute's new East Village space in New York.

Through the gallery space, each painting takes on its own dialogue with the viewer. Each of the depicted subjects seems to have been frozen in time, captured in an estranged moment of solitude. The artist works closely with the gaze of the subject in order to engage the viewer through the complexities of deep thought. Through the use of gaze, subjects range from looking at the viewer straight in the eye, like *Whisper*, 2021, to

be seemingly unaware of the viewers' presence, as is *Ritual*, 2021. Throughout her body of work, Mckinney's portraits are individual entities, although they coexist in the same universe. The bright pink nail polish, present in the majority of the works, strings together a narrative and enhances the viewer's experience.

Aside from the intensity in Mckinney's subjects' gazes, which suggest a strength seldom seen in the face of solitude, the artist's use of color adds a major contribution to the body of work. The artist depicts bright colors that contrast against the subjects' skin tone to produce balanced compositions. Her use of color contributes to the overall narrative of the work, as similar bursts of blues, oranges, or bright pinks generate the viewer to think of *Saw My Shadow* as either a coalition of moments in a single person's life. As the viewer, one can't help but feel identified in these works. The artist's style varies from depicting portraits with little to no detail of the environment around the subject, to compositions where the subject appears as the sole individual in a domestic space. Either way, the viewer can't help but feel an urge to join in this domestic comfort.

Present in her work is an unmistakable sense of calm and tranquility. The narrative, brought individually through each artwork, and strung together through similarities in color palettes, heighten the viewers' senses. The evident comfort present in the eyes and composure of the subjects allow the viewer to immerse themselves in each artwork and to feel within the depicted environment. To hear the water of the shower hitting against turquoise tiles, to hear the silence in a long train of thought, are elements of domestic everyday life that most can relate with. As an effect, the subject and the viewer converse in the presence of this environment, and the sense of calm in the body of work propagates itself into the gallery space and the viewer's eye.

Walking through the gallery space, faced with these relatively small acrylic paintings forces the viewer to get close to each work in order to fully absorb the detail in the figurative work. Each painting acts as a dialogue space where one is made to think about those moments throughout the day, where in a split second one's mind wanders into a dimension where no other things exist other than your own existence. Those moments of self care, solitude and deep thought in which all of Mckinney's subjects reside in, become extended through the viewer. Continue scrolling to see the rest of Mckinney's body of work, and if you're able, make sure to visit the exhibition at FORTNIGHT INSTITUTE, NEW YORK.