

HEADSTONE

Charm Bracelet

Rachel Hayden

December 3, 2022 – January 29, 2023

For Immediate Release:

Headstone is proud to announce *Charm Bracelet*, a solo exhibition by Rachel Hayden. Hayden presents twenty new acrylic paintings on panel. This body of work returns to the figure - specifically self-portraiture, intricately collaging rainbows, bugs, hearts, stars, and other dreamscape essentials. Hidden amongst the beings is ruminating, existential text, anchoring each relationship. Using metallic paints and a smidge of day-glo, the paintings command attention with a surprisingly soft tone. In this cheeky maximalist aesthetic, she initiates a contemporary cultural experience - a selfie - where, for a moment, you and she are captured together.

Known for her ostensibly digitized yet analog painting process, Hayden has created a distinctive, vibrant style. It's saturated, sharp, and strangely robotic in parts. In this exhibition, her work reminds us that one is never alone. Each flower, vase, moon, and butterfly is full of similar charismatic expressions, indistinguishable from a smize or perhaps a shrug (depending on your mood). Hayden exposes the constant life happening around us and how existence is imperative to each other's being. One is just as influential as the other, just as essential as the other, and in these portraits, balanced.

Charm bracelets date as far back as 75,000 years in Africa, using shells to adorn one's body. The "charm" was coined by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, and Hittites which appeared around 600 – 400 BC. They've been used as talismans to fend off evil spirits and used by celebrities like Elizabeth Taylor as a commemorative, yet fashionable accessory. This persistent need to collect and remember is foundational to making art and the headspace from which it begins. Within each work, be it in the title or imagery, Hayden describes a time or space to enter. In doing so, the nostalgia and history of such objects are created and memory takes hold.

Beyond the historical, Hayden's work invokes a ripe curiosity and star-struck appeal; they are soothing images - packing just enough conceptual punch. One can enjoy her arrangement of anthropomorphised flowers amongst chattering bugs and a giant, talking clay pot - an assertive attraction without a doubt; or, gaze at its spectacular brilliance like a sunset, surveying her delicately crafted colorfield.

Rachel Hayden is a Brooklyn-based artist from Cincinnati, Ohio. She graduated from MICA in 2015 with a BFA in Fine Arts. After graduating she worked in early childhood education at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, creating and teaching programs for children birth to five. Her paintings include anthropomorphized moths, butterflies, fruits, flowers and moons, tender hands, and detached self-portraits. Rachel's paintings revel in an introvert's sardonic pleasure found in solitude and extrapolate it into a cast of inanimate object-characters that serve as companion or voyeur.

Headstone is an artist-run, for-profit contemporary art gallery located in Kingston, New York, dedicated to showing two-person and solo exhibitions. The 1,100sq ft gallery space was created by artists Lauren Aitken and Chase Folsom. The gallery is deeply committed to our artists and their ideas, providing them with a beautiful contemporary space and the necessary support to help them foster and fulfill their artistic vision. It is with considerate curation and our vast love of the art world that we bring together and introduce emerging and established artists, some of whom have yet to benefit from wider critical and commercial attention. We believe the arts should be equitable and accessible to anyone who would like to engage. Through artist exhibitions, we hope that Headstone can collectively bring people together, create community, expand connections and become an engaging, diverse melting pot of artists, creatives, collectors, and community members.

Opening Reception: Saturday, December 3, 5pm-8pm

Gallery Hours:

Friday to Sunday, Noon- 5pm

Or by appointment

Headstone Gallery

28 Hurley Ave.

Kingston, NY 12401

headstonegalleryny@gmail.com

IG: headstonegalleryny