

GREENE NAFTALI

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Justin Caguiat *Carnival*

September 15 – October 22, 2022
Ground Floor

Greene Naftali is pleased to announce its first solo exhibition by Justin Caguiat, whose numinous, dreamlike paintings depict realms beyond the visible. Intimately rendered at a towering scale on lengths of unstretched linen, Caguiat's dense surfaces metabolize a range of sources: from the flattened forms of manga or woodblock prints to century-old Japanese erotica; the folk-baroque fusions of Filipino Catholic icons to the Vienna Secession's jewel-box modernism. A certain opulence or visual hedonism stems from that mix of registers and cultural ties, creating inner landscapes that revel in a toxic sublime.

Damaged figures and other lifeforms stir and recede into aqueous grounds of patterned color, which resolve on close inspection into an array of repeated motifs—neural networks, entrails, windowpanes, bodies shown whole or dissolved into parts. These nodal points are there for compositional ballast, yet no element's identity is fixed. Pools of paint could be orifices, solar flares, or discs of pure geometry; a figure in *Gretel in Pharmakon* (2022) may be the child innocent or the witch who torments her. Caguiat's penchant for indeterminacy recurs in his use of *pharmakon*, a theoretical term that translates to both poison and remedy—it can abide its own undoing. Like occult tapestries or frescoes from a ruined future, Caguiat's paintings are rife with signification but resist the tug of narrative, urging a directness of sensory experience that is alien to language.

That appeal to the viewer's perceptual faculties is magnified in *Hysteresis Loop* (2022), a recent experiment in heightening painting's innate capacity to shift and change before our eyes. Using heat-activated pigments and a radiant sensor rigged to the verso of a metal support, the work undergoes a set of slow but dramatic changes in color as its temperature rises and falls on programmed loop. These thermochromic pigments produce more vibrant, clarion hues than can be achieved by traditional means, deepening Caguiat's explorations of color theory and of painting as a time-based medium—one that rewards extended looking and is inherently resistant to reproduction.

The exhibition shares its title, *Carnival*, with one of Caguiat's early videos, shown here for the first time. Shot a decade ago in the industrial Midwest on a handheld VHS camcorder, the footage makes for an impressionistic, haunting document of both celebration and neighborhood havoc. A field recording from an earlier phase of the artist's life, *Carnival* finds grace notes within observed scenes of low-slung peril—a burning house against a cloudless blue sky.

Justin Caguiat was born in Tokyo in 1989, and lives and works between New York and Oakland, California. Recent solo exhibitions include The Warehouse, Dallas (2022); Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo (2021); Modern Art, London (2020); and 15 Orient, New York (2018). A published poet, Caguiat has participated in various readings and performances, including at the Kunsthalle Zurich (2017). His work is in the permanent collections of the Dallas Museum of Art and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, among others.

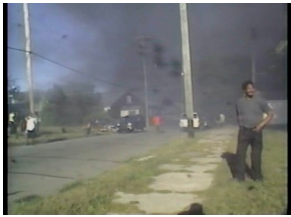
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Front Gallery:

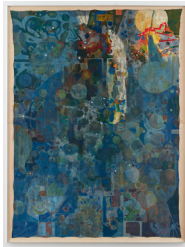


Carnival, 2012

Digital Video

8 minutes

Main Gallery, clockwise:



Cupio Dissolvi, 2022

Oil and gouache on linen, artist frame

Painting: 127 1/2 x 94 inches (323.9 x 238.8 cm)

Frame: 131 x 98 x 2 inches (332.7 x 248.9 x 5.1 cm)



Infiltrating Substance of Appearance, 2022

Oil and gouache on linen, artist frame

Painting: 85 x 112 inches (218.4 x 284.5 cm)

Frame: 89 x 118 x 2 inches (226.1 x 299.7 x 5.1 cm)



Proportionality, 2022

Oil and gouache on linen, artist frame

Painting: 85 x 112 1/2 inches (215.9 x 285.8 cm)

Frame: 88 3/8 x 116 1/2 x 2 inches

(224.5 x 295.9 x 5.1 cm)



I Love Him, 2022

Oil and gouache on linen, artist frame

Painting: 131 x 126 inches (332.7 x 320 cm)

Frame: 134 x 130 x 2 inches (340.4 x 330.2 x 5.1 cm)



Daisyworld, 2022

Oil and gouache on linen, artist frame

Painting: 126 1/2 x 162 1/2 inches (321.3 x 412.8 cm)

Frame: 131 x 166 x 2 inches (332.7 x 421.6 x 5.1 cm)



Nirvana, 2022

Oil and gouache on linen, artist frame

Painting: 126 1/2 x 148 inches (321.3 x 375.9 cm)

Frame: 129 1/2 x 151 3/4 x 2 inches

(328.9 x 385.4 x 5.1 cm)

Rear Gallery 1, counterclockwise:



Hysteresis Loop, 2022

Thermochromic pigment, wax emulsion, acrylic polymer emulsion, digital temperature controller and sensor, radiant heat substrate, aluminum

72 1/8 x 96 1/8 x 1 1/2 inches (183.2 x 244.2 x 3.8 cm)



Gretel in Pharmakon, 2022

Oil and gouache on linen, artist frame

Painting: 132 x 125 inches (335.3 x 317.5 cm)

Frame: 135 7/8 x 130 1/4 x 3 inches (345 x 331 x 8 cm)

Rear Gallery 2:



Intuition of the Ecstasy, 2021

Oil and gouache on linen, artist frame

Painting: 130 x 126 1/2 inches (330.2 x 321.3 cm)

Frame: 133 1/2 x 129 1/2 x 2 inches

(339.1 x 328.9 x 5.1 cm)