

MONYA ROWE GALLERY

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For Immediate Release

GRETCHEN SCHERER

Seeking An Exit

October 17 – November 23, 2024

Opening reception: Thursday, October 17, 6-8 PM

Monya Rowe Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new paintings by **Gretchen Scherer** titled *Seeking An Exit*. This is the artist's third solo exhibition at Monya Rowe Gallery. The opening reception for the artist will be held on Thursday, October 17, 6-8 PM.

Scherer's paintings are reimagined depictions of museums and private collections once owned by philanthropic historical figures. In this latest body of work, Scherer selected seven museums from six different countries: England, Spain, Russia, Austria, Italy and Germany. Deciding which museum room to depict is a combination of personal, historical and intellectual interest. Scherer hasn't actually visited many of the places chosen. Aesthetically, Scherer is drawn to Neoclassicism, Baroque, Gothic and Rococo. The locations may be identifiable, but are infused with artistic license.

Inspired by books, and hours of online exploration, Scherer methodically researches each museum by studying their collection and making note of her favorite artworks. Each painting features these masterworks displayed Salon-style reminiscent of 18th century exhibitions. Some of Scherer's paintings even depict masterworks haphazardly resting against a museum wall or furniture, suggesting the presence of the original owner. Scherer doubles as a curator by rearranging a collection how she sees fit. Functioning somewhere between homage, obsession, aesthete and would-be art historian, the spaces and artworks are transformed. However, Scherer, doesn't simply replicate masterworks, they are painted anew, injected with humor, playfulness and reverence. The traditional is juxtaposed with a contemporary sensibility. The scale commands the viewer to slow down and allow the eye to wander around each room - entering worlds within worlds - absorbing the many intricate details that take hundreds of hours to come to fruition.

The exhibition's title, *Seeking An Exit*, engages with themes of escapism, solitude, loss, attachment, memory and renewal. In *Trubetskoy Palace, Dining Room, 1914* (2024), Scherer focuses on the collection of Sergei Shchukin. After the Bolshevik party overthrew the government in 1917, Shchukin's collection was nationalized by the government, and the Trubetskoy Palace became a museum. Today Shchukin's collection is divided between the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, and the State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow. Scherer was forced to imagine the color of the walls, carpet and even some furnishings in the palace, as the only known documentation of the collection in its' original incarnation are in black and white. The artist also took the liberty of adding tea and pastries to the dining table, a napkin carelessly hanging over the grand table, with a nearby chair suggesting the presence of a diner. This absence is felt throughout Scherer's work and is a driving force. Some other locations included in the exhibition are the Royal Palace of Aranjuez, Spain and Lanhydrock House, England. Scherer's paintings represent rooms that may have been a personal sanctuary for the person who inhabited or created them, a place to escape and reflect.

Gretchen Scherer (b. 1979, Indianapolis, IN) received a MFA from *Hunter College*, NY and a BFA from *The University of Illinois at Chicago*, IL. Scherer was awarded residencies at *Skowhegan School of Sculpture and Painting*, ME and *Vermont Studio Center*, VT. Recent exhibitions include *Richard Heller Gallery*, LA; *Patricia Low Gallery*, Gstaad, Switzerland; *Gowen Contemporary*, Geneva, Switzerland; *Taymour Grahne*, London; and *Monya Rowe Gallery*. Scherer's work was highlighted in *Harper's Bazaar Latin Art Issue* in "Artists to Follow in 2022", and in *New York Magazine* by Jerry Saltz in "The Best Art Shows of 2021". Scherer's work was recently profiled in the Spring 2024 issue of *Juxtapoz* magazine ("Gretchen Scherer: If Rooms Could Talk"). Her work is also included in "New Surrealism: The Uncanny in Contemporary Painting" by Robert Zeller, published by *Monacelli Press* (2024), an imprint of *Phaidon*. The artist lives and works in West Creek, NJ and Brooklyn, NY.

Gallery hours
Tuesday – Saturday, 12–6 PM

For more information or images please contact the gallery at info@monyarowegallery.com

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