

Catherine Birk

House-Tree-Person

79 Leonard St, SBE, New York, NY 10013

April 3rd - May 9th, 2026

Opening reception: Saturday April 4th, 6-8pm

Press Release

D. D. D. D. is pleased to present *House-Tree-Person*, an exhibition of painting, sculpture, and video work by Catherine Birk. This will be the artist's first solo exhibition in New York City.

The title of the exhibition refers to the personality test of the same name. She depicts 'house', 'tree', and 'person' through an exploration of the physicality of domestic space and the icons and iconography that define it in her personal psychology. Infused by a consideration of Birk's identity as a trans lesbian and her concomitant desire for stable domesticity, the works take on a legacy of lesbian home-making and explore the ideas of self, queer identity, and abstraction.

Central to the exhibition is the video *hut (for the barefoot contessa)*. The work stars a cast silicone bust of the artist, adorned with a large chin and nose referencing the enchantress Strega Nona, a modern folkloric figure particularly known for her housekeeping and cooking magicks. Embodying her roster of domestic icons, Birk melts and molds wax for another work, *hut (for Strega Nona)*, as she recites recipes from the lesbian archive.

The paintings in the show are divided into two groups, *hut* and *dam*, each with a different system of abstraction. The hut paintings make use of netting to deconstruct geometric representations of houses. The resulting paintings mutate, distort and ultimately transform initially schematic images into something both constructed and naturally arrived. The dams maintain a similarly distorted grid, accented with miniature silicone figures; beavers, dollhouses, and fireplaces physically render signs of domesticity and the home.

Grappling with it formally, narratively, and ideologically, Birk claims abstraction as a gesture of ensuring transness' presence in public and private life: reframing domestic labor as an embodied practice of trans world-making.

Artist Biography

Cat Birk (b. 1994, Michigan) is an interdisciplinary artist based in Chicago, IL. Her practice brings transgender studies, queer theory, and critical theory into the expanded field of painting. Birk earned her MFA in Painting at the University of Wisconsin - Madison (2024), and BAs in Studio Art and Art History from the College of Charleston (2016). Solo exhibitions include *My mother is a horse.*, at the Chazen Museum of Art (Madison, WI). She has exhibited in group shows nationally, including at Redux Contemporary Art Center (Charleston, SC), Trout Museum of Art (Appleton, WI), Arts + Literature Laboratory (Madison, WI), Real Tinsel (Milwaukee, WI), Brick City Gallery at Missouri State University (Springfield, MO), and D. D. D. D. (New York, NY).