

Kristin Hjellegjerde

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SPOTLIGHT



Louis Bennett, *Can't Stop Thinking About It*, 2021, oil and alkyd on polyester, 70 7/8 × 51 1/8".

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In the works that will be presented at his solo show “Ariel,” Lancashire-born, London-based artist Louis Bennett explores personal narratives within the shifting context of British history and politics. Having grown up in Lancaster, Bennett also seeks to redress the lack of rich representation of the north in a London-centric art world, and situates his work as part of a contemporary revival of the northern Gothic. One of the most distinctive elements of Bennett’s work is the juxtaposing use of colour to create a visual world that is both nostalgic and fiercely contemporary, familiar and disturbingly surreal. This is perhaps most obvious in the artist’s depiction of people in contrast to their surroundings, which recalls the bold aesthetics of comic books and Pop art. Bennett’s process typically begins with the collection of ephemeral materials, such as old magazines and books, which are selected for their historical resonance. Whilst elements of these materials may provide visual or atmospheric inspiration, both the composition and narrative of each painting develops spontaneously, creating a palpable sense of rawness and intimacy. This method of working also expresses Bennett’s fascination with the concept of collage and ‘its capacity to expand the imaginative scope of painting and transform the meaning of an image through the process of juxtaposition.’ Drawing on a wide range of references from literature, poetry, politics, cinema, artistic movements, pop culture and personal experience, each painting offers a rich, multi-layered viewing experience.

View a tour of the exhibition [here](#).

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