



Bridget Mullen, *Birthday Series #4*, 2021. Flashe on linen, 12 x 9 inches

Bridget Mullen

Birthday

July 10 - August 28

Opening Saturday, July 10, 4pm - 8pm

Walk-ins welcome, appointments encouraged.

Shulamit Nazarian is pleased to present *Birthday*, a new series of paintings by New York-based artist Bridget Mullen. This will be the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

The paintings in *Birthday* utilize two distinct parameters to guide the creation of 32 iterative works: a vertical orientation at an intimate scale of 12 x 9 inches and a visualization of perhaps the ultimate creative act—the moment of birth. Through this consistent scale and thematic hyper focus, the artist employs endless formal

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Los Angeles

variations in composition, color, and paint application. The result is a series of paintings that share a common structure yet champion individuality.

Contrasting colors provoke a visible tension, one that is at times compressed and, in other moments, elastic. Suddenly, abstract shapes come into focus as human anatomies, capable of expressing emotion. Undulating lines of various thicknesses and layered colors squeeze together, revealing peculiar faces and gestures that emerge from a central point. The repetition of thin lines creates a visual stutter of pigment, alluding to the passage of time or rapid movement. As noted by the New York-based painter Michael Stamm in a recent essay on Mullen's *Birthday* series, "The paintings are always one absurdist step away from becoming *something* – an exasperated mom, a monkey shading his eyes with his hands, an art deco dog's butt. To understand one of Bridget's paintings is to delight in completing the exquisite corpse of a narrative it has passed one's way. Her play begets yours."

Stamm continues, "Bridget embraces a more contemporary idea of the body as a near-totally unstable and immaterial signifier. Having a gendered body is probably a *political* condition, Bridget's paintings suggest, but it is definitely a *weird* one." Stamm is both a friend of Mullen and a represented artist at Shulamit Nazarian. His full essay can be found [here](#).

The works in *Birthday* build on Mullen's practice, combining color, decisive mark-making, intuition, and experimentation to conjure psychedelic configurations. Sculptural dimensionality and flatness, representation and abstraction, and solidity and fluidity, serve not as dichotomies within these works, but as two complementary halves of a whole. Together, the forms and figures in *Birthday* are imbued with a sense of life, pregnant with agency and potential.