

## Amy Winstanley *Lost Hap*

Margot Samel is pleased to present *Lost Hap*, a new suite of paintings by Glasgow-based artist Amy Winstanley (b. 1983, United Kingdom). The exhibition title derives from Sara Ahmed's meditation on happiness and its etymology in her book *Living a Feminist Life* (2017). Here, Ahmed traces the word's origin back to the Middle English word *hap*, defined as luck or chance, asking how, in this current moment, happiness seems to have 'lost its hap', meaning its lightness and curiosity, its ease and unsystematic nature. Winstanley's title itself has some of these attributes, at first registering humorously as a spelling error – hat for *hap*.

Ahmed's text refuses to separate the personal and political, or mind from body, and she writes against the hierarchies, racism and sexism of our societies. For Winstanley's purposes, this has implications for our understanding of the constrictive ways of being in the world that have led to the climate emergency. *Hap* is also a component part of *perhaps*, *haphazard* and *happenstance*, and with this body of work, she astutely suggests that painting might be a space where new connections can be mooted and something of these lost qualities regained. As such, the artist's stance is similarly critical to Ahmed's, albeit more obliquely.

In the studio, Winstanley follows an open, meandering and intuitive approach. She doesn't prepare for a painting in any traditional sense, instead she constructs a constellation of activity of which painting is one part – along with reading a book or making a drawing, listening to a podcast or looking at an artist's monograph. Winstanley flits between these things, ideas filter between the tasks, and in the paintings a set of relationships gradually emerge. This attitude is key to the range of effects that surface in each work. There are speckled sections of dark maroon quilted together, swathes of blue dispersed by narrow vines of yellow and light pink, the stacked forms of a cultivated hillside, dark branches (as if lit from behind), and a hazy orange sun. Some marks find their place quickly, thickly applied or dry brushed, while other are worked in, mixed together, or overpainted. The white of an undercoat of gesso shines through thinner passages in the pieces, giving the colours vibrancy and the compositions a luminous aspect.

The cumulative result of Winstanley's decisions is a set of complex natural textures and small vistas which resemble psychedelic landscapes – as if moving through a forest into a clearing, your vision temporarily affected by the change in light. This is no coincidence. Winstanley grew up in rural Scotland and was always surrounded by nature. This enmeshment was an important influence on her way of seeing and it comes to the aid of her

Margot Samel  
295 Church St  
New York, NY 10013

+1 212 597-2747  
info@margotsamel.com

margotsamel.com

painterly work and concern with the climate crisis. Her paintings reflect the freedom and exploration of her childhood, and their ecological allusions point to a radical effort to find points of connection with the world. They are full of mutualistic relationships, unexpected bonds and braids, elements embroiled with other elements – of things happening.

— Calum Sutherland

Amy Winstanley (b. 1983, Dumfries, UK) is based in Glasgow, UK. She received a BA (Hons) in Sculpture from the Edinburgh College of Art (2005) and an MA from the Sandberg Instituut, Amsterdam (2019). Recent solo exhibitions include: Moral Limb, Stallan-Brand, Glasgow, UK (2021); Grief Bruise, Lunchtime Gallery, Glasgow, UK (2021); Inscapes, AndCollective Gallery, Bridge of Allen, UK (2016); and Interconnections, Gracefield Arts Centre, Dumfries, UK (2015). Recent group exhibitions include: Strangers, Rongwrong, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2022); tangible/intangible, The Haberdashery, Glasgow, UK (2022); Potluck, Gallery 17717, Seoul, South Korea (2021); To All Our Absent Dialogues, Warbling Collective, London, UK (2020); Surge, Patriothall Gallery, Edinburgh, UK (2017); Fugue Lounge, Neverneverland, De Punt, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2018); Surge, Patriothall Gallery, Edinburgh, UK (2017); Every word left unspoken during the exhibition is the title, Neverneverland, De Punt, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2017); Spring Fling at Home, Gracefield Arts Centre, Dumfries, UK (2014); and Members Show, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow, UK (2015). Winstanley was nominated for the Sluifprize for painting 2019 (Netherlands), and has been the recipient of the Hope Scott Trust award (2014) and the Creative Scotland Visual Arts Award (2010 and 2014). Along with the artist collective ALKMY she has published short stories and images in What Ties Ties, Ties (2020) and What Thoughts Think Thoughts (2021) both through Print Art Research Centre, Seoul, Korea. Winstanley has an upcoming solo exhibition at Cample Line, Thornhill, UK in July 2023.

Margot Samel  
295 Church St  
New York, NY 10013

+1 212 597-2747  
info@margotsamel.com

margotsamel.com