

• FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE •

Sarah McKenzie

Interim

October 21 - November 24, 2021

Opening Reception: Thursday October 21st, 5-8pm

No appointment necessary/free and open to the public/ Artist in Attendance

David B. Smith Gallery is proud to present *Interim*, a solo exhibition by Boulder, CO-based artist Sarah McKenzie.

In the gallery's project space, painter Sarah McKenzie offers up three recent canvases from 2020 and 2021. At first glance, these works don't appear to directly address the Covid-19 pandemic, but McKenzie sees her paintings as reflective of the cultural moment that we have collectively experienced: a period of transition and uncertainty, characterized by feelings of isolation, suspension, grief, and longing. In *Cage*, the New York City skyline is visually bound by a large cage-like sculpture, evoking the experience of containment and confinement. In *Sentinel*, an empty chair in an empty museum gallery elicits a sense of loss as well as expectation. In *Interim*, a gallery sits vacant after the deinstallation of a show; McKenzie presents the space in its in-between state—a necessary pause, ripe with potential.

These three works are also reflective of changes within the artist's own studio practice since the start of the pandemic. McKenzie has been painting scenes of museum and gallery interiors since 2014, but in 2020 she began researching a new direction for her work, exploring a different form of institutional space: the architecture of prisons. In April 2021, McKenzie received a generous grant through the Marion International Fellowship for the Visual and Performing Arts to support her new project, to be unveiled in Fall 2022. The three paintings on view in this show—although not a part of McKenzie's prison work—represent the artist's musings on creative transition and transformation as she pursues this new line of inquiry.



Image: Sarah McKenzie, *Cage (Whitney Museum with Brendan Fernandes)*, 2020, oil and acrylic on canvas, 60 x 60 in. (152.4 x 152.4 cm)

About Sarah McKenzie

Sarah McKenzie is a painter based in Boulder, Colorado. She holds a BA in film studies from Yale University and an MFA in painting from the University of Michigan. McKenzie's paintings document our built landscape, exploring changes in our architecture (what we build) for evidence of social, economic, and cultural shifts (why we build). Over time, her work has focused on construction sites, abandoned buildings, hotel rooms, and (most recently) the white-walled interiors of museums and galleries. Since early 2020 she has been researching a new project exploring the architecture of prisons. McKenzie has exhibited her paintings nationally, including shows with the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, the Yale School of Architecture, the New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe, the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, the Aspen Art Museum, and the Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art, among other venues. In 2012, McKenzie received a Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptors Grant, and in 2019, she was awarded the 10th Alexander Rutsch Award for Painting. In Spring 2021, McKenzie received the Marion International Fellowship for the Visual and Performing Arts to support her prison architecture series. When she is not in the studio, McKenzie helps to run Tilt West, a Denver-based arts and culture nonprofit, and she teaches visual art through the University of Denver Prison Arts Initiative (DU PAI).

About David B. Smith Gallery

David B. Smith Gallery is committed to presenting intelligent and culturally relevant exhibitions in its Denver location, featuring the region's most important emerging talent alongside internationally recognized artists. Through its curatorial program, participation in art fairs, and extensive media coverage in publications such as *Art in America* and *ARTnews*, David B. Smith Gallery has cultivated a strong regional, national and international collector audience. The *New York Times* hailed the gallery as offering "an exciting contrast of cutting edge works" and *The Denver Post* declared that it is the "premiere commercial space" in Denver. The gallery also maintains an active publishing division, which produces exhibition catalogues and editions.