

# INMAN GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 27, 2024

Inman Gallery is pleased to present

**ALEXIS PYE**  
***The Melancholic Girls Brigade:  
The Lovers, The Dreamers,  
and Me***

May 3 – July 6, 2024

Opening Reception  
Friday, May 3, 5:00—7:00pm

Artist in Conversation  
Saturday, May 18, 1:00pm



Alexis Pye, *Night Out*, 2024 oil, oil pastel on canvas  
70 1/4 x 70 1/4 x 1 1/2 in (178.4 x 178.4 x 3.8 cm)

Inman Gallery is pleased to present *The Melancholic Girls Brigade: The Lovers, The Dreamers, and Me*, a solo exhibition of new work by **Alexis Pye** on view May 3 – July 6, 2024. The exhibition opens **Friday, May 3**, with a reception from **5–7pm**. The artist will be in conversation with Dr. Anita Bateman, Curator at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston on **Saturday, May 18 at 1pm**. This will be Pye's second solo show at the gallery and first in the main gallery space.

**Alexis Pye's** artistic practice explores the tradition of portraiture to express the Black body outside of its social constructs. Placing her subjects in leisurely, luscious, often nature-rich and even fantastical settings, her works evoke playfulness, wonder and Blackness, as well as the joys amidst adversity. Her formal strategies include an integration of mixed media within painting, including embroidery, collage, and punch-stitch needlework.

*The Melancholic Girls Brigade: The Lovers, The Dreamers, and Me* offers a portrait of young adulthood exploring the transition between one's late twenties and early thirties. A meditation on the artist's own life stage, Pye paints female figures, often alone and content in their own company. Her protagonists exist in public spaces –bars, cafes, and other cityscapes– while being absorbed internally, perhaps as melancholic lovers or dreamers as the title suggests. Showcasing both paintings and works on paper, the exhibition embodies emotional undertones of navigating breakups, interpersonal relationships, and balancing pragmatism with romanticism.

In Pye's paintings, the setting is equally important to the narrative as the figures themselves. Throughout the exhibition, a white border outlines certain figures to physically separate protagonists and their environments, or from other figures within a scene. As if cut out and collaged onto the painting, Pye captures a sense of being superimposed or transplanted (the artist herself is a Detroit native working in Houston). This remixed imagery brings DJing and other musical references into the exhibition, while offering visual harmony with works on paper that feature collage and fiber. Informed by Detroit culture and iconography, Pye's works present an assertive essence of the self as a compass for navigating transitory young adulthood.

Within a larger art historical narrative, Pye evokes artistic productions at the close of the nineteenth century, with references to Édouard Manet's, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (1882) in *Night Out* (2024), and most directly, Gustav Klimt's *Nuda Veritas* (1899) in *I'm Just Looking For the Truth* (2024). Replacing Klimt's nude figure with her own self-portrait, Pye asserts her own pursuit of truth and body politic to paint this reflective imagery in a contemporary light. The portraiture of this art historical era, known as the the fin de siècle ("end of century"), poignantly parallels the exhibition's transitory theme, moving from one era into the next.

In many ways, *The Melancholic Girls Brigade: The Lovers, The Dreamers, and Me* is Pye's most personal exhibition to date. Astutely self-aware and unhindered by self-consciousness, the works invites us to as a collective to turn inward, embrace our solace, and think, dream, wonder, wait and love as we please.

## SPECIAL EVENT

**Alexis Pye in conversation with Dr. Anita Bateman**  
**Saturday, May 18, 1pm**

**Alexis Pye** (born 1995, Detroit, MI) holds a BFA in Painting from The University of Houston. She has had solo exhibitions at Art League Houston, (Houston, 2024), Lawndale Art Center, (Houston, 2023), and Inman Gallery (Houston, 2021). Her work was included in recent group exhibitions at Fort Worth Contemporary Arts at the Art Galleries at TCU (Fort Worth, 2023), Women & Their Work (Austin, 2023), Sheet Cake Gallery (Memphis, 2023) University Museum at Texas Southern University (Houston, 2023), Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston (Houston, 2022) and Community Arts Collective (Houston, 2021), She has completed residencies with Project Row Houses (Houston, 2018), Lawndale Art Center (Houston, 2022) and the Asia Society (Houston, 2023) and will attend the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture Residency in Summer 2024. Pye lives and works in Houston, TX.

For more information, contact Grace Earick at [grace@inmangallery.com](mailto:grace@inmangallery.com), or call 713-526-7800.



upper: **Alexis Pye**, *I'm Just Looking for the Truth* [detail], 2024, gouache pastels, graphite, pastel, 64 x 42 inches

lower: **Gustav Klimt**, *Nuda Veritas* [detail], 1899 oil on canvas, 94 1/2 x 25 3/8 inches