

Huffington Post: 'Artist Brings Back Rococo Painting And Leaves It Out to Rot', September 17 2014

Genieve Figgis' paintings are reminiscent of 18th century Rococo canvases, all fanciful afternoons in petticoats on swing-sets or lavish banquets at tables that are far too big. Only instead of the glossy, detailed renderings that transform luxurious fantasies into hyperrealistic depictions, Figgis' works trap their subjects in swamps of sugary acrylics, assuring the subjects will stay put for centuries to come.



Figgis' current exhibition, 'Good Morning, Midnight,' is a playful ode to the powers of paint when laid on so thick it mutates all things in its wake. Bougie picnics, afternoon piano lessons and Victorian mansions are transformed from picturesque visions into sites of horror through the simple mantra of more paint. The images appear to molt and melt before your eyes, like a children's book that's been left in the rain and begun to fester.

At first, looking at the paintings on view feels like putting on a stranger's glasses and adjusting to the prescription. Eyes drip down eroding cheeks, smiles take on a Joker-esque sinister qualities if they don't disappear completely, and faces threaten to fade into the pockets of the flesh that house them. The silly putty cast, an aristocratic selection of sad clowns and ghosts, amuse as much as they threaten, like mildly wicked spirits poking fun from the grave.



Somewhere between the textured badlands of Allison Schulnik and the nasty nostalgia of Jennie Ottinger, Figgis' wonderfully disturbing paintings take all the sugary frills of 18th century frivolity and leave them out to rot. We get the strange sensation from viewing the works that if we could access the cadavers in person, they'd still smell like cake.

The zombies that remain, too soft to be human but too thick to be ghosts, remain forever immortalized in the slop of the paint that created them. At least they're painfully well dressed.





