

ALMINE RECH

JUXTAPOZ
Art & Culture

Thank You For The Nice Fire: Chloe Wise Balances the Surreal and Intimate @ Almine Rech, NY

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Chloe Wise, *Glowing symptoms of success*, 2021, Oil on linen

The great author and philosopher Jean Baudrillard wrote in his 1986 book, *America* that “This is the only country which gives you the opportunity to be so brutally naive: things, faces, skies, and deserts are expected to be simply what they are. This is the land of the ‘just as it is’.”

This is the backdrop to where Chloe Wise set her newest solo show *Thank You For The Nice Fire*, on view on March 4 at Almine Rech in NYC. And there seems to be something perfectly metaphoric with his body of work coming on the heels of a vaccine and our desperate and perhaps ill-timed attempt to "get back to normal." The press release mentions "We want to butter our toast, eat it too, and cleanse our hands of it immediately," and Wise is touching on our ideas of advertising, marketing and fantasy in each of these paintings.

Where her portraits in past shows spoke of friends and personal intimacy, *Thank You For The Nice Fire* is more of an ethereal and surreal examination of our relationships with the modern world. Baudrillard went on to write in *America* that, “The smile of immunity, the smile of advertising: ‘This country is good. I am good. We are the best’,” and as the Canadian-born painter is observing, there is almost a mania and frantic grin underneath our desire for some sort of pretuned normalcy. Writer Kristen Cochrane noted a "willful ignorance" that Wise is proposing, and in a (supposed) post-Trump era where fact and fiction and interchanged and exchanged wherever the viewer sees fit, even these works can be swamped for hope and dismay.