



HOLLOW TREE NIGHTS
An exhibition of new works by
Daisy Sheff
C L E A R I N G, Los Angeles
September 30 - November 5, 2022

In a moment of extreme sadness, the poet H.D. created a brand new world. She called it the “over-consciousness,” and it’s “the world of waking dreams and the world great lovers enter, but only the greatest.” To access this second world, H.D. imagined slipping on an amorphous hat, transparent yet with a definite body, which she described as “a closed sea-plant, jellyfish, or anemone.”

Daisy Sheff’s *Hollow Tree Nights* is best seen through the over-conscious. Her highly narrative illustrations are like the margins of an illuminated manuscript. Each rendered symbol adorns part of a story, joined to the composition by a reaching hand improvising props to stand-in for characters and feelings. Expressivity works like a dog’s eyebrow—effusive, non-verbal, and immediate. Self-aware declarations are replaced with a total commitment to sensitivity, sustained attention and engagement—a total rebuke of convention.

Everything can seem new ! Ordinary objects can have a magical quality, encountered under-water, through the supreme pleasure of the over-consciousness.

In *Sungrinning Lemon Vine Thicket*, Sheff painted thin flowering vines first, and then carefully rendered everything else beneath those initial brushstrokes. A skunk, flower petals, the suggestion of a face, a stylish heel are all tenderly tucked into the painting, protected like items in a treasure chest and knitted into place by telluric colors and patterned geometry.

A sun bleached and tertiary palette suggests that beneath the surface of Sheff’s canvases exist layers upon layers of paint sediment. This is supported by the way images edge in and out of her compositions. *I Think I’ll Sleep Tight Tonight* shows a girl in bed bounded by gridded colors. It’s the mound she would make in bed, the grid is part of her dress and part of her room, both in equal measure. These are paintings to go to sleep to and to wake up to, that change the longer you look at them.

Imagine lying down in a field of grass. It appears still until your eyes adjust to motion. Ants are outlining blades of grass and spiders navigate stems and shoots. Slowly you see a landscape from the perspective of an animal. The content rises up out of the material.

– Theadora Walsh

Daisy Sheff (born 1996 in Greenbrae, USA) lives and works in Inverness, California.

She received her BFA from UCLA in 2018.

Solo exhibitions of her work have been held at Ratio 3, San Francisco; South Willard, Los Angeles; and White Columns, New York.

Her work has been featured in group exhibitions at C L E A R I N G and Grimm Gallery, New York; Ratio 3, San Francisco; and UCLA Sculpture Gallery, Los Angeles.

Daisy Sheff’s work is part of the permanent collections of The De Young Museum, San Francisco; and Aishti Foundation, Beirut.