



CLEARING

Allergy Season

An exhibition of new works by **Sebastian Black**

September 24 – October 17, 2020

CLEARING Brussels

We went to LA for India's job. After one day they had her working remote from the living room of our Pasadena sublet. I tried to keep a diary in the house's little office but it almost drove me mad. There was a drawer full of Masterlocks and a little bag full of lock picking stuff and I thought, well, if all else fails at least there's something to do. You have to remember those were the days when we were polishing our zucchinis with Clorox before we let them inside.

After a few weeks we moved in with my in-laws which is where I took the photos that later became these paintings. India's dad watching cable news. India and her sister smiling. My reflection in a window. I was suffering acute allergies from all the pollen in the air and obtuse anxiety from everything else. Still it was better than the office in Pasadena with the locks and the thoughts and the view of the church parking lot.

Back in Brooklyn we went to a rapid testing site where a woman called me sweetheart before scraping my brain with a plastic wand. Then we drove to the country to visit some newly scattered friends. Lydia and Luke's place had those old wooden floors with the wide planks that city folk like us want to roll around on. There was a hole in the second floor and you could see clean through to the bouquet on the kitchen table downstairs but there was a prison the size of Monaco on the edge of town which dampened the general effect. James and Alyssa have a Sears kit house on a double lot. The date of construction was stamped into the concrete foundation like a hieroglyph from the ancient civilization that was Greenville. They have babies and fruit trees and that kind of dream.

Lately India's belly has been swelling up like Eve's in the Ghent altarpiece and yesterday it hit me that the expulsion was an allegory for birth. I went to church every Sunday for years but no one ever mentioned that. I made these paintings in between the road trips and the leaves and the arcadia. I was in my studio sans AC, shirtless, and still sniffly.