

# BROADWAY

Mickey Lee  
*Whistling Past the Grave*  
May 29 - June 27

Broadway is pleased to announce *Whistling Past the Grave*, its second solo exhibition of new paintings by New York artist Mickey Lee.

Populated with fantastical animal/woman hybrids and various beasts of illogical anatomy and comportment, Lee's oblique allegorical narratives are rooted in the alluring strangeness of folktales and mythology. As such, they sit at the nexus of Modernism, Outsider, and faux-naïf traditions and conjure a peculiar collision of innocence and experience. For example, in *Village Giants* a cluster of Amazonian nudes stands fitted with the heads of various animals—rabbit, horse, dog, bull, and cat. The image mingles power and docility in a tidy parable/critique of representation.

As the artist puts it:

"The title of this show draws from the old idiom 'whistling past the graveyard'—to act or talk as if one is not afraid, or unbothered, in the face of something frightening. It implies trying to appear cheerful and confident while denying or ignoring a threat. It captures the delicate balance at the heart of my work: the interplay between beauty and unease, innocence and menace."

Formally, flat planes of pure color serve as the setting for these curious creatures who shift drastically in scale, familiarity and legibility—from direct art historical interpolations, to hybrid forms of unknown precedent. Lee's freewheeling approach marries Surrealism's narrative instability with a more blunt and immediate paint application, to strange and haunting effect. Where the Surrealists dressed up pure desire and irrationality in exquisite technique, Lee takes a more direct, raw route. As a result, the erotic charge that runs through the exhibition is counterbalanced by a wide-eyed, playful openness.