



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
JENNIFER COATES | *Toxic Halo*

January 23 - March 1, 2020
Opening Reception Thursday, January 23, 2020, 6-8PM

HIGH NOON is pleased to present **Jennifer Coates's** debut with the gallery. The title, ***Toxic Halo***, is a phrase from a song written by the artist called "Ruin." *Sunlight hits the flesh, the air repeats your name, like a toxic halo around me.* In her paintings, radiant halos surround figures and trees, amplifying the color relationships between shapes and their environment. Coates's color choices-- phosphorescent green and jaundice yellow combined with synthetic pink and corporate lavender-- are both glowing and sickly toxic. She manipulates the inherent transparent properties of acrylic paint to achieve a surprising and unique luminescence.

Coates's process is linked both to the ancient divination practices of generating stories about the future through tea leaves, ripples in water, even entrails, as well as surrealist automatism-- where artists would find imagery through accident. She begins her paintings with spills, stamping, or other intuitive gestures to generate a charged surface from which forms emerge and inform her subject matter. The painting *Haruspicy* lifts a dead cow from an ancient Roman relief sculpture of diviners examining its innards; the etymology of the word "haruspicy" literally means to look at entrails. This painting, the only large one in the show, depicts the cow's insides departing its body to animate and merge with the forest around it in a psychedelic scene of regeneration.

Toxic Halo is Coates's first solo show to include an extensive variety of drawings and works on paper, which are integral to her larger paintings. These drawings were completed in the fall at a residency at the Civitella Ranieri Foundation in rural Umbria, where she drew the garden and landscape outside her door. A recurring theme is half-human, half-animal hybrids that populate matrices of leaves and branches that break down into passages of color and intricate mark making.

The art historical precedents of bathers in the landscape are playfully referenced. Cezanne, Matisse and Picasso are present, but also the tree paintings of Mondrian, and the visionary works of Emily Carr and Charles Burchfield. In this series Coates mystifies the historical, blending it with the contemporary. The works feel both personal and universal and are filled with an eerie pathos.

Jennifer Coates is a painter living and working in New York City and Poyntelle, PA. She received her BFA from University of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and her MFA from Hunter College. She is a recent recipient of the Sharpe Walentas Studio (2018-2019) and was a fellow at the Civitella Ranieri Foundation in Italy (Fall 2019). Recent solo exhibitions include *Correspondences* and *All U Can Eat* (Freight & Volume Gallery) and *Carb Load* (Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts). Her work has been written about in the *Brooklyn Rail*, *Art Critical*, *Hyperallergic*, the *Huffington Post*, *Smithsonian Journeys* and *Art News*, among other publications.

Please join us for the opening reception Thursday, January 23rd from 6-8PM. Refreshments will be served, and a full-color, limited edition catalog of the exhibition will be available for purchase with an essay by poet Dora Malech, Assistant Professor of poetry at Johns Hopkins University. For any additional information about the exhibition or **HIGH NOON's** programming, please contact Jared Linge at jared@highnoongallery.com, or call 760.519.1956.