



*Yesterday and Tomorrow*

Rush Baker IV

October 14 – November 18, 2023

Opening Saturday October 14, 2023

Keijsers Koning is pleased to present Rush Baker IV's "*Yesterday and Tomorrow*", his debut solo exhibition at the gallery. On view will be eight new works - buried within them the past, present, and future.

As we move past the debate of representational vs abstraction, Baker looks at the immersive quality that is allowed by these expressions. Layering historical graphics over tones of brash brush marks, all the while submerged by colors. These forms explode past their perimeter and give the viewer a sense that the work is a window to a wider experience. The energy in Baker's paintings manifests itself through layers of digital collage, resin, plaster, concrete, and paint. The various media are interwoven, at odds, and chaotic, slowly revealing compositions of both destruction and reconstruction.

Large and colorful, both beautiful and terrifying, his paintings possess the currents of emotional energy felt within the present-day fight for social justice. Baker's narrative is a search for the promise of tomorrow, while acknowledging the marred path that leads us to our current condition. Our identity is buried within the layers, offering a reflection of the zeitgeist. Baker is not interested in abstraction as a self-determined unit, but rather as a strategy that is utilized to alter a predetermined idea. There's an oscillating tension between the more representational elements in Baker's works and the use of the gesture as erasure. As Jack Whitten wrote in 1964, while questioning the act of painting: "*Beneath every surface lies an identity, the amount of depth beneath this surface determines the value of its being.*"

Rush Baker IV (American, b. 1987, Washington, D.C.) has exhibited his work both nationally and internationally, including solo exhibitions at Scaramouche Gallery and The Cooper Union in New York City, Honfleur Gallery in Washington, D.C., and in group shows at Zidoun-Bossuyt in Luxembourg, The Third Line Gallery in Dubai, The Harvey B. Gantt Center in Charlotte, NC, Bowie State University, MOCADA in Brooklyn, NY, Koki Arts in Tokyo, and Yale University. In 2022 Baker presented his second solo exhibition with HEMPHILL in Washington, D.C.. He received a BFA from The Cooper Union for Advancement of Science and Art in 2009 where he received the Jack Stewart Memorial Prize for Excellence in Painting, and an MFA from Yale University in 2012, where he received the Elizabeth Canfield Hicks Award for outstanding achievement in drawing or painting from nature. In 2023, Baker was selected as a Trawick Prize finalist. Baker lives and works in Prince George's County, MD.