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### Exhibition of recent paintings by California artist Bruce Cohen opens at Berggruen Gallery



Bruce Cohen, *Interior with Matisse Cut-Out*, 2020. Oil on canvas, 36 x 54 inches (91.4 x 137.2 cm).

SAN FRANCISCO, CA.- Berggruen Gallery is presenting Bruce Cohen 2020, an exhibition of recent paintings by California artist Bruce Cohen. This show marks Cohen's tenth solo exhibition with the gallery and is on view December 3, 2020 through January 9, 2021.

Bruce Cohen's most recent body of work presents a series of captivating interiors. Each composition contains an element of ethereal intrigue, whether it be a floral bouquet perched beside a seemingly boundless window view or a Piet Mondrian painting cast in the geometric shadow of another object. Fastidiously organized yet whimsically conceived, the scenes do not exist in reality but are instead invented from the artist's own imagination. Cohen produced many of his most recent paintings while in quarantine—this period of global isolation leading the artist to explore the passage of time in a domestic setting more acutely than ever before.

Influenced by Dutch still life painting and Surrealism, Cohen orchestrates his compositions to feel simultaneously representational and completely dreamlike. Cohen cites René Magritte as his first inspiration as a young painter and has held the Belgian Surrealist as an enduring influence ever since. Reflecting on his former student's fascination with the movement, Paul Wonner wrote of Cohen's work in 1999, "I feel sometimes that I am looking at a place where some tremendous, mystical event has just take place. The people concerned have just moved on out of sight, but there remains on the scene the residue of a magic moment." Over two decades later, Bruce Cohen

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continues to surprise his viewer with this kind of transformation, transcending our domestic realities.

Bruce Cohen 2020 features a selection of oil paintings from 2017-2020. Depicting quotidian objects amidst unreal settings, Cohen employs his distinct, hard-edge style. The artist will juxtapose varying elements within a single canvas to extenuate the inferred movement of space, light, and time. A foregrounded bowl of fruit sits for the viewer against a vast and unknown portal of sky, both elements hinting at what kind of world lay outside the painting's rendered realm. The artist increases this tension by playing with color—including both saturated and muted hues—and with light—including both sun streaks and dewy shadows. Overall, the scenes become both familiar and otherworldly.

Bruce Cohen was born in Santa Monica, California in 1953 and continues to live and work in Southern California. He studied at UCLA and UC Berkeley before earning his BA from the College of Creative Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1975. Cohen is represented in numerous, prestigious public and private collections, including that of Phillip Morris, New York; Pacific Bell, Los Angeles; the San Diego Museum of Art; and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.