

JDJ

Sharon Madanes

Bedside Histories

JDJ Tribeca
373 Broadway, B11
New York, NY 10013

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JDJ is thrilled to present the debut solo exhibition of New York-based artist Sharon Madanes.

Sharon Madanes transforms banalities of medical life into boldly colorful, saturated oil paintings. A full-time doctor as well as an artist, Madanes paints from her experiences treating patients in medical and psychiatric wards of the hospital, drawing from her memories and from sketches made on shift during periods of downtime.

Some paintings describe familiar medical tedium—filling out paperwork in a waiting room, note-taking in a therapy session, lying in a hospital bed as the sun sets outside the window. Others are tableaux of tangled bodies and limbs, kinetic, balletic depictions of dramatic psychiatric interventions that border on violence.

Madanes's paintings nod to art history, from Mannerism to German Expressionism, to the medical paintings of Thomas Eakins. Her compositions are often compressed and figures are cropped, faces obscured or omitted, shifting focus to disembodied legs and hands. Alluding to the need to preserve patient confidentiality, Madanes's fragmented figures mirror a medical field that atomizes the body into discreet zones of care, while also evoking the inclination to avert one's gaze among strangers in an intimate setting with little privacy. Vulnerable and claustrophobic, they speak to the frequent breaches of bodily autonomy and personal space that are part of administering and receiving healthcare.

Equally, these paintings are lush explorations of the particular aesthetics of hospital life. Madanes lavishes attention on decorative details of her chosen environment: starchy privacy curtains become opulent blue textiles, fluorescent light is painted in harsh neons, Exit signs become spotlights illuminating the theater of medical practice. Clocks loom overhead in many scenes, reminders that the hospital operates according to its own time signature, a universe unto itself.

Born of her own sense of duality, straddling two professional identities, Madanes's paintings testify to the way her work as a doctor informs her work as an artist. They also raise questions about how her work as a painter might influence her practice of medicine, in reimagining the hospital as a space of discovery, meaning and beauty.

Sharon Madanes (b.1985, Chicago, IL, lives and works in New York, NY) received a BA from Yale University, New Haven, an MFA from Hunter College, New York, and attended medical school at Columbia University, New York. Madanes has received several awards and residencies, including the Rema Hort Mann Foundation, the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, the Shandaken Paint School and the Mortimer Hays-Brandeis Traveling Fellowship. Her work is currently on view at Perrotin, Paris, and has recently been exhibited at Taymour Grahne, London, The Drawing Center, New York and Pelham Art Center, Pelham, NY, among others.