

UNDERLININGS

Gina Malek

November 11 - December 15, 2016

Opening reception: Friday, November 11, 6 - 9 PM



"Touch", oil and acrylic on canvas, 76 x 102 cm, 2016

Magic Beans Gallery is pleased to present Underlinings, a solo exhibition of paintings by New York-based artist Gina Malek. In this new body of work, Malek explores themes of confinement, the mechanics of the remembered self, and the impermanence of memory.

The remembering self recalls significant changes and intense experiences, but quiet actions like fingers tapping, the heaviness of feet unused, and hushed instances of contact are more difficult to recall. Malek focuses on these particular muted motions and imbues them with extra weight. The artist carefully explores

subjects with intimacy and sincerity, catching authentic fleeting moments and underlining their most essential parts. Everyday tasks such as manicures, haircuts, or transferring a body from a bed to a chair are given importance. Bodies are seated on thrones made of wheelchairs, recliners, hospital beds and jail mattresses. Malek manifests the friction of these often uncomfortable interactions through surfaces rich with expressive color and mark-making contradictions. Layers of paint unfold into a series of leftovers, introductions, and absences. Hard-edged shapes float on top of large areas of colorful wash. Presented as traces of human behavior, essential marks of paint bloom with intention and vigor.

Malek's work evades a straightforward reading and lingers purposefully on ambiguities. Sometimes the mark becomes the subject itself, other times it searches for contours of a hand or chin. Bodies emerge from and retreat into the background. In some of the works two bodies are engaged, but there is always an abstraction of one figure while the second body emerges with a stronger and more concrete presence. The quiet space leaves room for the viewer to find her essential moment, gesture, and sensation.