

EDITORIAL

Editor's Picks: Henry Curchod



Nightmare, 2022, Oil and charcoal on linen 137 x 111 cm

Reflecting a darkly comic sensibility, Henry Curchod's work often takes a cavalier approach to the darkness of life and history. When he makes a more direct statement, it is always at a slight remove. In place of self-portraits, demons, the devil and the underworld enter the frame: *Hot Blood* (2023) and *Nightmare* (2022) depict mostly ordinary scenes, yet they feature creatures with red skin and horns as a stand-in for the artist. Decadent decorative backgrounds and surfaces further undermine the supposed mundanity of these moments. When scenes become bigger, more elaborate, a sense of depraved carnivalesque akin to Hieronymus Bosch the Elder takes over.

Dreams, mythology, forgotten histories, painting, popular cartoons and other forms of narrative are expressions of how we might conceive of ourselves and the world around us – they can also be tools to transcend our political and cultural horizons. Curchod's characters embody a devilish spirit. He weaves elaborate, complex images that are imbued with a poetic affirmation of imagination and feeling. The message of these paintings lives beyond their subject matter and process of construction; they gesture towards disobedience and rebellion, they ask us to look anew at the world. – Excerpted from Chris Hayes' exhibition text.