

NOVO

Press Release

Sparks Chris Hood

Solo exhibition

Dates: May 8 – June 12 2021

Opening | May 8 at 4:00 pm

Exhibitions hours | Mon – Sat / 10:00 am – 1:30 pm & 2:30 pm – 7:00 pm

NOVO is pleased to present *Sparks*, the first solo exhibition held in Florence by the American artist **Chris Hood**. The show, featuring Hood's new series of works, will be inaugurated on May 8 at 4 pm at the Gallery Exhibition spaces in Piazza Carlo Goldoni 2, Florence.

"The mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be kindled." (Plutarch, 1st century AD)

This simple, yet constitutive, idea that our brain needs a stimulus to trigger a reflection rather than the passive act of internalizing a preconceived thought, seems the guiding principle of *Sparks*. Indeed, ignition is the protagonist of Chris Hood series both figuratively and conceptually. On the one hand, the spark theme vividly comes out from Hood's apparently flat surfaces, transforming the canvas into a window. However, when one observes more carefully the compositional scheme of Spark series, the different elements portrayed arise within their enigmatic blend revealing Hood's unique process of painting from reverse while using multiple layers of paint.

Flames, fire and the Promethean attempt to capture them are juxtaposed to American counterculture and mass media, drawing attention to the innate human desires. The perceptual tension and the intentional ambiguity are exactly what ignites the mind of who is posed in front of the work. Among the works exhibited the spark theme is declined every time in a unique and different way. In some cases, it is the brightness of colours that suggests excitement, in others, the deeper palette makes the canvas more buoyant while revealing a potential for distraction. In other works, it is the natural element that becomes subsumed by the surface of the painting. To remain constants is the interplay between abstraction and figuration, a feature that challenges our perception while questioning our understanding of images and the role of painting in our contemporary world.

"I have a preference for clichés and truisms. They can be fluid in their ability to describe something profoundly real and simultaneously be without meaning in their obviousness. In my work, I exploit the tension between disparate clichés and archetypes complicated by a tension between digital and physical space. [...] Through veils of color, mark-making and imagery I explore eternal themes bound in the dawn of a new millennium.", Hood explained.

Chris Hood, born in 1984 in Atlanta, lives and works in Los Angeles.

Though being representational, the paintings, sculptures, and drawings by the American artist reflect an understanding of the abstract nature in which personal and social imagery collide in the twenty-first century. Combining traditional techniques with the languages of digital territories, his work often features images culled from American counter-culture, art history and mass media rendered abstract by translation. Drawing parallels to his interests in psychophysics, the paintings are cast in a liminal space with a unique reverse-stain technique that rests his compositions in ambiguous and perceptual tension. Likening them to faded advertisements or t-shirts turned inside out, Hood invests the evocative physicality of his paintings with themes of identity, memory and loss. The resulting works hint at challenges with the idea of static perspective while pointing to larger questions concerning the role of images and contemporary painting.

Among his last exhibitions, we remind: *Known Unknowns*, Saatchi Gallery, London (2018); *Novel Gazers*, Lyles & King, New York (2017); *Fort Greene*, curated by Adrienne Rubenstein, Venus Over Los Angeles, Los Angeles (2016); *Chris Hood & Zach Reini*, curated by Domenico de Chirico, Brand New Gallery, Milan (2016).

Press Contact

exhibitions@eduardosecci.com (+39) 055 661356

The Knack Studio | tamara@theknackstudio.com ; (+39) 347 0712934