

EMILIANA HENRIQUEZ

Philosophia

September 6 - October 7, 2023

FORTNIGHT INSTITUTE

21 East 3rd St. NYC

after "Greens Echo Through My Beings"

corrugated frame meets glistened shadow
exodus and sigh but stay here
sensorial distance shunts the tunnel
logic bred on a Sunday evening
each witness a foothold in shadow and each
witness now rests. a gaze meets then exits
the frame
plenty like a rose's burden
like how the scent will linger, like how the scent then folds

A raw, continuous sensuousness animates the figures and spaces in each of the eighteenth paintings in Emiliana Henriquez's *Philosophia*. The terrain of each of these pieces unfolds with a patient viscosity, resting in the full field of space. These are ecstatic works, paintings at the cusp of a moment. But these works are also ones that are deeply languorous, the figures luxuriate. The movements and gestures brim and then exist in that state of fullness. They hum there. The heat is nearly palpable. Take *Green Echoes Through My Beings*, in which a seated figure wears only underwear and a skirt rests high on the thighs. The figure directs their soft gaze back at the viewer and the entire painting is bathed in a scale of greens. Other paintings from this series are washed in scales of blues or reds. The continuum of the monochromatic range invites the viewer to look more closely and more precisely at the exact reds and greens and blues that exist in these works.

These paintings act as both reclamation and incantation, insisting on the repatriation of mythological symbols that have been distorted to suit the needs of commerce and capitalism. Henriquez does not abandon these symbols but instead reimagines other possible ways of exalting them. There is something inherently buoyant and hopeful about this orientation and it speaks to an aspirational commitment to a world to come. Henriquez's work propels us into a future that is in the act of unfolding or has yet to unfold. The names of her pieces speak to this desire, with titles like *Potentiality is part of our humanity* and *Above all "fidelity"*. Each of these

eighteenth pieces are imbued with an intimacy and the pleasure of being witnessed, and Henriquez invites the viewer to take part in that pleasure, too. To be sure, though, the pleasure already exists on its own accord, with or without the gaze of the viewer. The figures' existence is self-contained and complete, already surrendering to how they each cast themselves in the waxing light.

by Asiya Wadud

Emiliana Henriquez (b. 1986) in El Salvador, lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. *Philosophia* is Henriquez's debut solo exhibition in New York City at Fortnight Institute. She previously exhibited with Swivel Gallery, New York, Charlie James Gallery, Los Angeles, and Tchotchke Gallery, Brooklyn.