

CRISTIN TIERNEY

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Joan Linder and Maureen O'Leary  
*Slightly Surreal Suburbia*

June 18 – August 6, 2021

Opening Reception: June 18, 6:00 to 8:00 pm

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219 Bowery, Floor 2  
New York, NY 10002

Cristin Tierney Gallery is pleased to present *Slightly Surreal Suburbia*, a two-person exhibition with Joan Linder and Maureen O'Leary. The show features new paintings by O'Leary alongside works on paper and sculptures by Linder. *Slightly Surreal Suburbia* opens Friday, June 18th, and continues through Friday, August 6th. This will be the first major exhibition for both artists with the gallery.

For as long as suburbs have existed, life in their quiet communities has been a subject of intense interest. They are governed by particular rules of conduct and social expectations that set them apart from cities. Relationships among neighbors involve a strange comingling of secrecy and voyeurism. And underneath their ostensibly calm surfaces there is often a wealth of eccentricity and darkness hiding, as explored through many notable films, television shows, works of photography, books and more from the mid-20th century to today.

Linder and O'Leary live in Buffalo and Mt. Sinai, respectively, and like so many of us they have experienced life in suburban areas. In the last year, the two artists became deeply enmeshed with their surroundings as the pandemic curbed most travel and they found themselves spending more time at home. *Slightly Surreal Suburbia* showcases new works by both women devoted to the sights and people in the 'burbs; together they are a consideration of domestic life outside of the metropolitan sphere.

Joan Linder has had a lifelong obsession with the passage of time, which she channels through inordinately detailed ink drawings and sculptures made from paper, foam and duct tape. Many of Linder's works are life-size, forming near-perfect replicas of actual objects or people she has encountered. In *Slightly Surreal Suburbia*, Linder presents objects that capture the anxiety we all felt in our homes in 2020. They approximate the items they represent, but close looking reveals small imperfections and touches of the artist's hand. *Isolation Orders* is a to-scale drawing of a letter Linder received with the governor's state-wide order to shelter in place in March 2020. *Wet Ones* is a slightly-off reproduction of a container of antibacterial hand wipes, created painstakingly with slices of tape to approximate the in-demand good.

O'Leary's paintings capture the oddness of the everyday in her neighborhood on Long Island. She presents fleeting, moody scenes viewed from her home and studio; in *The Trash at Night*, we see a man dragging a trashcan behind him, set against a backdrop of leafless trees and an ominous glowing moon. The sky is a mottled purple tinged with juicy reds and oranges, lending an eerie feeling to the already uncanny image. *The Mail, March 2021* shows a tiny hand emerging from a darkened USPS truck to drop a letter in a mailbox. It is the only sign of life in the painting.

Joan Linder (b. 1970) is known for her labor-intensive drawings that contain thousands, even hundreds of thousands, of tiny lines. She has exhibited at Albright College, Faulconer Gallery at Grinnell College, The Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Omi International Art Center, Sun Valley Art Center, Weatherspoon Art Museum and more. Her work is held in the collections of The Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Davis Museum, Bank of America, Fidelity Investments, Progressive Corporation, West Collection and the Zabłudowicz

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Collection. She studied at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and holds an MFA from Columbia University and a BFA from Tufts University. Among her many awards and fellowships are residencies at MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Smack Mellon, Ucross Foundation, Art Omi, and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, plus a Pollock Krasner Foundation Grant.

Maureen O'Leary's (b. 1965) paintings hover between figuration and abstraction. Her mundane scenes become substrates for experimentation with the application of paint and the evolving notion of what is real. O'Leary's work has been exhibited at the Fondation des États-Unis, Ely Center of Contemporary Art, Art Lab Tokyo, Midwest Center for Photography, Artspace, Power Plant Gallery at Duke University, Valdosta State University Fine Arts Gallery, Staten Island Museum, Meadows Gallery – University of Texas at Tyler, and more. She is the recipient of the Brooklyn Arts Council – Brooklyn Arts Fund Grant and the Harriet Hale Woolley Fellowship from the Fondation des États-Unis. O'Leary has published three books: *Record* (2021), *Belle Mort* (2013, Paper Chase Press) and *Look/Listen* (2010, Look/Listen Press). Her work is held in the collections of the Fondation des États-Unis and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University.

## Image

Left: Maureen O'Leary, *The Trash at Night*, 2021. oil on linen. 48 x 32 inches (121.91 x 81.28 cm).

Right: Joan Linder, *Wet Ones*, 2018. duct tape and foam. 7 x 3 ¼ x 3 ¼ inches (17.8 x 8.3 x 8.3 cm).

## Inquiries

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