

Prick from a Rose & Tropical Purgatory

— Michael Garland Clifford

November 15

through

January 12

MICKEY is pleased to present two solo exhibitions of work by Michael Garland Clifford.

Prick from a Rose is a survey of paintings employing a floral motif, an important part of Clifford's lexicon. The flowers in these paintings are not only treated as objects of beauty and admiration but also of pain. In these works flowers can be placed on the canvas as if laid on a grave, strewn on the floor and forgotten, locked up, burnt into a painting or floating angelically in the sky. For Clifford, flowers are beautiful, but they can also embody the darker side of the human experience.

Tropical Purgatory, Clifford's immersive installation, occupies the small gallery. A middle ground between paradise and inferno, a place of waiting and repentance: this purgatory is one of leisure and beauty. In this place where the die is cast and the fate is absolute, the things that once were fun now become maddening. The ennui of it all can really weigh you down... *Tropical Purgatory* was posthumously constructed from digital renderings, drawings and correspondence for a proposal at Locust Projects (Miami) where it was originally installed in February 2018.

Both of these exhibitions emphasize the macabre aspects of Clifford's work. Clifford often used themes of memorial, loss, fate, love and sentimentality. It is tempting to romanticize the death of a young artist, especially one that so heavily romanticized his own death. It is hard not to drown him and his work in tired romantic clichés, yet it was those very clichés that he often used as subject matter. There is a desire to imbue some power of prophecy to the work, Clifford himself said "The use of familial materials in (my) work suggests a proclivity towards childhood prophecies and intuition."

Michael Garland Clifford (b. 1989 Miami - d. 2016 Miami) received his BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His work has been exhibited with Nina Johnson(Miami), El-Saieh Gallery(Port-au-Prince), QT Gallery(New York), and CourtneyBlades Gallery(Chicago).

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