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Cathy Wilkes

Ortuzar Projects

In this Belfast-born, Glasgow-based artist's characteristically subtle new show—her first in New York since a solo exhibition at MOMA PS1, in 2017—a series of gracefully evasive paintings hang on the walls at a toddler's eye level. The faint compositions, with their scattered scriblings, evoke hazy recollections of rooms and landscapes. Wilkes's gestural economy, her judicious use of horizon lines, and her varying modes of abstraction amplify the over-all poetic effect, as do found objects (balled-up socks, a crystal dish filled with water) placed on the floor beneath the paintings. The displaced domestic items have a votive quality, as if the artist were making offerings to angels or ghosts—as embodied, perhaps, by a fragmentary figure, made of papier-mâché, fabric, and acrylic, standing in the center of the room with arms outstretched. Like everything in this delicate but potent exhibition, the source of the sculpture's strength is its precarity. (*Ortuzar Projects.*)

—Johanna Fateman