

ARTFORUM

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Rebecca Morgan

Asya Geisberg Gallery
537B West 23rd Street
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By Chris Bors

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Rebecca Morgan, *Self-Portrait at 100 Still Doing All My Favorite Shit*, 2023, oil on canvas, 30 x 24".

Like underground comic artist Robert Crumb, whom [Rebecca Morgan](#) references across several paintings and works on paper in this solo exhibition—self-deprecatingly titled “Over the Hill”—her life is an open book, albeit an exaggerated one full of tongue-in-cheek role-play. With this collection of self-portraits, a lone landscape, and a rendering of her therapist, Morgan’s over-the-top bawdiness is tempered by a psychological acuity and deep introspectiveness that contrast with, in the words of *Mad* magazine, a sense of “humor in a jugular vein.”

In the oil-on-canvas *Self-Portrait at 100 Still Doing All My Favorite Shit* (all works 2023), the artist is seen lounging on a mustard-colored armchair with a pot pipe in hand. Next to her is an end table bearing a can of Coke, Oreos, chocolate-chip cookies, and a large vase of flowers. Donning paint-stained studio garb, Morgan’s warts-and-all approach to detail can be seen in the way she depicts her sagging, wrinkled visage and spotted, hairy legs. A picture of Crumb’s Mr. Natural character is framed and sits in a bookcase—which also happens to display monographs on artists such as Artemisia Gentileschi, Norman Rockwell, and Lisa Yuskavage—illustrating a funny, frank, and capacious sense of art history that she fits inside of beautifully. Another oil, *Eyeball Painting*, renders the titular (mind the pun) facial feature as a pair of enormous breasts stuck to the surface of a canvas laid out flat on a countertop. The work is reminiscent of the classic Crumb strip “Stoned Agin!” from Apex Novelties’ *Your Hytone Comix*, 1971.

The more subdued watercolor-and-gouache *Self-Portrait on the First Day of Summer Break (First Day of Making this Show)*, captures Morgan staring into the distance, her hair knotted with scrunchies, switching modes from her role as instructor at Bard College in New York’s Hudson Valley to dedicated studio artist. The conflict between these two lives may be best summed up between *Hudson Valley Plein Air (May 12, 2023)*, an academic yet romantic oil-on-panel landscape, and *Self-Portrait in the Picture Plane*, a watercolor showing Morgan’s dazed rosy face and contorted nude body uncomfortably squeezing into the frame.