

MoMA PS1 PRESENTS FIRST SOLO MUSEUM EXHIBITION OF ARTIST WHITNEY CLAFLIN
OPENING MARCH 27, 2025

LONG ISLAND CITY, New York, December 11, 2024—Whitney Claflin’s (American, b. 1983) first solo museum exhibition, *I was wearing this when you met me*, features a focused selection of works tracing her distinctive approach to painting and ongoing engagement with notions of infatuation, misrecognition, and waywardness. On view from March 27 through August 25, 2025, the exhibition includes over twenty new and recent paintings, which careen between subjects and styles ranging from lyrical abstractions and breezy sketches to snippets of text, renditions of logos, and scraps of mass-produced textiles. Following the associative logic of a mixtape or poem, they express transient states of intensity. In addition to paintings, the exhibition also includes drawing, photography, video, and sculptural interventions, highlighting Claflin’s multifaceted approach.

With varying degrees of legibility, Claflin embeds a plethora of references and subcultural symbols within her works, from nods to 1970s flower-power paraphernalia, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, and beloved New York bars, to Pavement lyrics. The late-90s DIY scene of her teens in Providence, Rhode Island, forms a touchstone of Claflin’s practice, which channels its dissonant lo-fi energy while reflecting on the increasing rarity of the conditions making such radical and communal projects possible. Interests in the capriciousness of trend cycles and the binding effects of branding inform her work. The logo for Dickies jeans appears in one painting, while in *Venice Beach* (2011–22), among the earliest works in the show, Claflin recycles the sign she used to advertise the hand-painted, glow-in-the-dark “vases” (empty wine bottles) she sold for a period on the boardwalks of Venice Beach. In other works, insignias become springboards for abstraction, as in *Die Eisdealer* (2024), in which an icecream cone dissolves into a storm of gestural marks.

The frenetic tempo and texture of New York City, where Claflin has lived for fifteen years, suffuses her work. The city surfaces in references to signs, stores, and streetscapes: drippy brushwork mimics the palimpsest of a building’s wall, while a price sticker from Academy Records invokes the longstanding New York record store, which has persisted despite shifting economic odds and rising rents. The photograph *Union* (2022), printed on a sheet of Avery® shipping labels, captures a tag scrawled on the side of a mailbox; it reads “Cat Marnell,” the name of New York ‘it-girl’ blogger, with the “a” transformed into an anarchy symbol. Claflin’s works capture the uneasiness of cultural tipping points, in which relations between center and periphery, norm and exception, are rearranged or flattened.

The exhibition also features a suite of drawings depicting leftover items such as yogurt cups, receipts, and matchbooks made in conjunction with Claflin’s book of poetry *Food and Spirits* (2022). The residues and trimmings of daily life—such as Juul pods, decals, SIM cards, and make-up—festoon many of her surfaces. She twists modes of adornment typically coded as feminine or sweet into gestures of defiance or armoring. In *Cinema* (2024), two nails tack a rhinestone bracelet to the edge of a canvas upon which dark brushstrokes frame a vacant, glowing, yellow center. Claflin’s works posture as discrete scirms across which images transform and dissolve, analogues for the process of negotiating selfhood within a universe that teems with affinities, intoxications, and distastes.

Whitney Claflin (b. 1983, Providence, RI) lives and works in New York. Select solo and two-person exhibitions include Derosia, New York (2024, 2020); Drei, Cologne (2024, 2020); Haus Erholung,

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Mönchengladbach, Germany (2024); Drei (2022); and Real Fine Arts, New York (2017, 2014, 2010). Select recent group exhibitions include Gallery Vacancy, Shanghai (2024); G2 Kunsthalle, Leipzig (2023); Layr, Vienna (2023); Office Baroque, Antwerp (2023); Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn (2022); Sandy Brown, Berlin (2021); Shoot the Lobster, New York (2020); Galerie Buchholz, New York (2019); Croy Nielsen, Vienna (2018); and Greene Naftali, New York (2018).

Whitney Claflin: I was wearing this when you met me is organized by Jody Graf, Assistant Curator, MoMA PS1.

SUPPORT Teiger Foundation

Leadership support for *Whitney Claflin: I was wearing this when you met me* is provided by the Teiger Foundation Exhibition Fund.

Additional support is provided by the MoMA PS1 Emerging Artist Fund.

ABOUT MoMA PS1

MoMA PS1 champions art and artists at the intersection of the social, cultural, and political issues of our time. Providing audiences with the agency to ask questions, access to knowledge, and a forum for public debate, PS1 has offered insight into artists' diverse worldviews for more than 40 years. Founded in 1976 by Alanna Heiss, the institution was a defining force in the alternative space movement in New York City, transforming a nineteenth century public schoolhouse in Long Island City into a site for artistic experimentation and creativity. PS1 has been a member of New York City's Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) since 1982 and affiliated with The Museum of Modern Art since 2000.

Hours: MoMA PS1 is open from 12 to 6 p.m. Thursday, Friday, Sunday, and Monday, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays. Closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

Admission: \$10 suggested admission; \$5 for students and senior citizens; free for New York State residents and MoMA members. Free admission for New York State residents is made possible by The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation. Tickets may be reserved online at mo.ma/ps1tickets.

Visitor Guide: Discover even more from MoMA PS1 with the Bloomberg Connects app. Read wall text, hear directly from artists, and uncover the building's history with this multimedia visitor guide. This digital experience is made possible through the support of Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Directions: MoMA PS1 is located at 22-25 Jackson Avenue at 46th Ave in Long Island City, Queens, across the Queensboro Bridge from midtown Manhattan. Traveling by subway, take the E, M, or 7 to Court Sq; or the G to Court Sq or 21 St Van Alst. By bus, take the Q67 to Jackson and 46th Ave or the B62 to 46th Ave.

Information: For general inquiries, call (718) 784-2084 or visit moma.org/ps1.

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