

SKARSTEDT

# MUSÉE

VANGUARD OF PHOTOGRAPHY CULTURE

MAR 28 ERIC FISCHL: HOTEL STORIES | SKARSTEDT GALLERY



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Eric Fischl, *Untitled*, 2023, acrylic on linen, 72 x 78 inches 182.9 x 198.1cm, signed and inscribed *Eric Fischl 2023.005* (on the reverse)

Written by Max Wiener

We all deserve an escape at some point. Life is a crowded, invasive pantomime, constantly updating people on your status or where your last meal was; it can feel performative. To truly escape is a rare activity and, more so, a fleeting feeling akin to a small morsel of what is truly desired. In his series *Hotel Stories*, artist Eric Fischl takes this need to escape and places it in a fantastically unique setting: hotel rooms. No permanence is required, and only small amounts of time are dedicated. Fischl understands that and runs with this singular idea. In the nine works presented, Fischl uses a photographer's eye and a painter's hand to tell stories of love, lust, and, most prominently, loneliness. Our worlds become theirs, and their lack of life furthers us into each work. *Hotel Stories* is presented at New York's Skarstedt Gallery and has a scheduled closing date of May 4th.



Eric Fischl, *Snapshot of a Marriage*, 2023, acrylic on linen, 62 x 72 inches 157.5 x 182.9 cm, signed, titled, and inscribed *Eric Fischl SNAPSHOT OF A MARRIAGE 2023.006* (on the reverse)

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Hotel rooms are private glimpses into a cursory existence, and our very invitation into them feels invasive. We see people during their most vulnerable moments, whether shared or alone. Fischl does a tremendous job of capturing the certain oeuvre of a lonely hotel room: dark colors, solemn facial expressions, etc. Unless the subjects in the paintings are enjoying a shared existence, the work feels downtrodden. However, this does not turn us off from the emotional palette that is shown to us; we are drawn further in. We want to experience these people's lives, hear their stories, and feel their emotions of loneliness. The whole series is a very meta-look at this exact plotline. We, as viewers, cannot spend all of our time on one piece, so as we move from one to another, we understand each piece's ephemeral fervor. Like the subjects, we have to move on, and our time spent viewing one piece is like our time spent in a hotel room. This is Fischl's mastery in full effect. He gives us just enough to draw us in but not enough to keep us there long-term, emphasizing the need to move on and begin the same process with another of his pieces. Because of this, we hear nine different stories and leave the series with a more robust understanding of the pieces and our emotional palette.

The pieces with a "shared" existence - more than one person is present - have a very naughty and promiscuous feel to them, and each focal point has us wondering about each different side of the story. You want to hear each voice in the piece and understand *why* they chose this hotel room. We're invited to look at something we shouldn't be seeing, rendering each piece as a sort of taboo viewing room. It's a fantastic yin-yang effect that allows *Hotel Stories* to be the full, vigorous artistic experience we desire.



Eric Fischl, *Breakfast Begins the Day or Ends the Evening*, 2023, acrylic on linen 68 x 96 inches 172.7 x 243.8 cm, signed, titled and inscribed *Eric Fischl BREAKFAST BEGINS THE DAY ORENDS THE EVENING 2023.030* (on thereverse)