

Essie Somma

Prompt Response: Phallacy

1. A false interpretation of reality based on white-male conventions that silently influence the ways those who are not white or cis gendered men interact with the world.

“She had succumb to the phallacy of success and cast aside the other women at the table for her own benefit.”

2. The assumption of authority when none is naturally possessed, or the taking of power

“Empowered by phallacy, 6 men over the age of 70 decided what medical procedures could be deemed elective.”

3. Refusal to recognize the of fluidity between and within genders

“He told her that she didn’t give off feminine energy, something she knew was a phallacy, because there is no one way to perform femininity.”

Work Statement:

Series title: Intimate Gospels

Intimate Gospels looks at the ways self-employed women cope, manage, and navigate our lives and responsibilities. Examining the space between pushing and resting, the work provides a glimpse at moments devoid of persona.

It’s difficult to succeed (achieve a desired aim, not attain power) as a woman without performing for others. We add clothing to be taken seriously and feel safe. We reduce our filler words, deepen our voices, and slow our cadence in an effort to be heard. And we shrink, laugh when appropriate, and brush off unjust criticism hoping to have a seat at the table. Underneath all of this is effort. We are trying. Trying is exhausting and wonderfully honest.

This is not a #girlboss lifestyle. Rather it is in opposition to the glamorization of hustle culture and discourages the patriarchal techniques of exclusion and prevarication. The lives depicted by Intimate Gospels do not participate in the phallacies of patriarchal workplace etiquette. They instead show traversed loneliness and personalized work ethic, all aestheticized to highlight how beautiful simply trying to exist is.

We are women. Fucking strong, determined women. We love, we sleep alone, we watch our money, we work all day, we dance all night, and we support each other. We do not gaslight, gatekeep, or girlboss.

Bio:

Essie Somma is an internationally practicing artist originally from the Outer Banks of North Carolina. She received her high school diploma from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts with a concentration in visual arts. Then went on to receive a Bachelor's degree in Studio Art from the University of California Santa Barbara. While attending college she completed the Art Marketing and Business program at Sotheby's Institute of Art in London. Since 2013 she has been featured in over 20 shows across four states and participated in residencies across North America. After working as freelance painter and Art Director for the Elisabeth Jones Art Center Artist CoLAB in Portland, Oregon for 3 years, Somma is now focusing on her own art practice while living a nomadic life abroad.