Morgan Ogilvie

You Are the Last to Arrive

532 Gallery Jaeckel
Hammerstrasse 121, 4057 Basel
25 February – 17 April 2027
Opening reception: Thursday, 25 February 2027
18:00–20:00 · in the presence of the artist

532 Gallery Jaeckel is thrilled to present *You Are the Last to Arrive*, Morgan Ogilvie's first solo exhibition with the gallery, following her participation in *In Bloom* (2025) and *On a Bit of Earth Which Had No Name* (2026). The exhibition, which brings together more than twenty new paintings, opens Thursday, 25 February 2027. Drawing on the courtly theater of Versailles and the quiet mechanics of social media, Ogilvie turns the act of looking back on the viewer.

At first, the room appears to offer a familiar pleasure. Richly colored oil paintings recall the splendor of an eighteenth-century court, from whispering courtiers to a pair of aristocrats with their dogs, and invite the eye to linger. But something shifts. The paintings are no longer simply there to be admired. The visitor has become the spectacle.

The title sets the terms. *You Are the Last to Arrive* is both an announcement and an accusation. A ritual is already underway, everyone else seems to know the rules, and you have entered late, uncertain of your place.

Ogilvie understands the power of a well-executed illusion. As a child, she learned sleight-of-hand magic tricks from her father, discovering how easily attention can be directed away from what is actually taking place. Painting offers its own form of misdirection. Ultramarine frock coats, blood-red sashes, and knowing glances pull the viewer into the pleasures of costume and intrigue.

Her command of oil paint is part of the trick. Drawing on Western iconography and popular culture, Ogilvie builds faces and costumes from broad, saturated planes of color and visible, unfussy strokes, so each figure feels immediate yet slightly out of reach. A cheerful palette carries the unease. Her practice moves between large canvases and grids of small panels and returns to the "unreliable" female narrator, whose version of events can never quite be trusted. She also cites Thomas Lawson's *Artforum* essay on painting as camouflage, which holds that the medium can undermine the certainty of appearances.

The reversal has a long lineage. Diego Velázquez's *Las Meninas* (1656) unsettles the boundary between those who look and those who are looked at. At Louis XIV's Versailles, visibility was a form of power. To be seen at court was a privilege, to be overlooked a threat, and every gesture carried social consequence. Centuries later, social media offers a contemporary court of carefully arranged appearances, where visibility confers status and belonging is measured through an endless exchange of glances.

As Ogilvie explains:

> “A painting can create a world you momentarily become a part of. This world-building does not overwhelm you immediately the way VR or cinema can. It is slow and delayed. It gradually reorganizes your orientation until you suddenly realize you are already inside its logic.”

You Are the Last to Arrive asks what happens when looking ceases to be an innocent act. Who controls the scene, and who decides who belongs?

Morgan Ogilvie is a Nashville-based painter whose work examines the psychology of social encounters, theatricality, and the shifting relationship between observer and observed. She holds an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts, 2020) and a BA in Psychology from Kenyon College, and was a Vermont Studio Center resident in 2023. Her work has been shown at the Frist Art Museum in *Enough to Go Around*, included in Artforum.com’s MFA Spotlight (2020), and the subject of an interview in *Locate Arts*.

Founded in New York’s Chelsea district in 2008, 532 Gallery Jaeckel represents and exhibits international, intergenerational artists working across painting, sculpture, and installation. The gallery opened its Basel space in 2025.

Opening hours
Wednesday–Friday, 14:00–18:00
Saturday, 13:00–17:00

www.532gallery.com

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