

Bernardo Siciliano | *Panic Attack*

December 11th, 2015 – January 30th, 2016

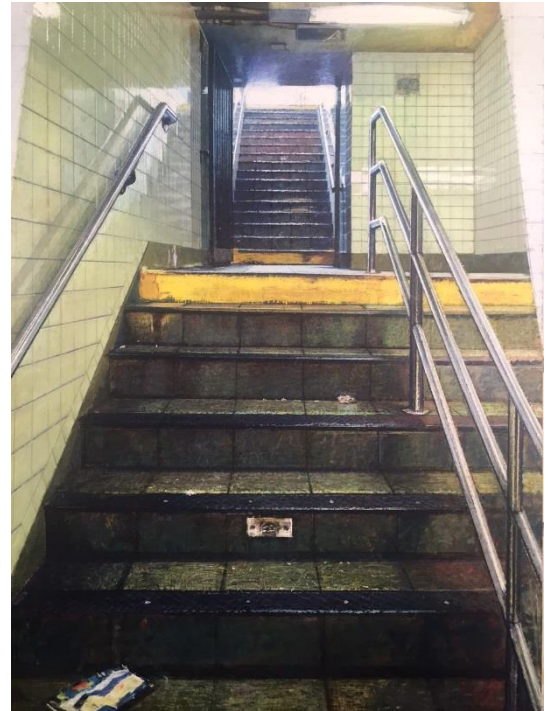
V.I.P. Reception & Press Preview: Friday, December 11th, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

35 Great Jones Street, New York N.Y. 10012

Aicon Gallery New York is pleased to announce *Panic Attack*, a solo exhibition of New York-based artist **Bernardo Siciliano**. Born in Rome in 1969, the artist has made New York his home and muse. Capturing the rugged urban sprawl of the city, Siciliano manages to highlight the many tattered edges of its fabric. He then turns his outer-gaze, inward in a series of confrontational portraits. His subjects often meet the viewer's gaze dead on, their expressions vacant. Dark, monochrome backdrops make it difficult to formally situate them, leaving it up to the viewer, perhaps, to see the city reflected in their faces. In this exhibition, Siciliano presents a sort of composite self-portrait of his life and in New York.

Siciliano has always painted with an anxiety beneath the surface of his paintings, hence the title of the exhibition. Perhaps being an artist in one of the most vibrant and bustling cities in the world can indeed be panic inducing. There is simply too much material to choose from but Siciliano slices through this potential snare in the current exhibition and has produced a remarkably calming set of canvases and drawings. Interestingly, there are rarely figures in his cityscapes, creating a surreal and uncanny feeling, as New York streets are rarely empty. "I feel that people in a landscape make the canvas feel like an illustration. I grew up liking landscapes with no people." Richard Diebenkorn's cityscapes from San Francisco were an influence, as are the menacingly empty plazas of De Chirico. All the street scenes are locations close to the artist, places he knows all too well and are familiar to him; daily life in Dumbo and Tribeca, where he frequently visits the New York Academy or the streets in Midtown where his daughter lives.

The portraits are Siciliano's friends, intimate images of people he has known for many years, both in a private setting and subsequently the studio. All the portraits are painted from life and the sitters come back year after year, the relationship between artist and model evolves and ages with the passing of time, like a long-standing and sometimes complicated friendship. In this exhibition we have portraits of a physiotherapist, dancer, bartender and two professional photographers, very much a cross section of life in New York City. "It's a representation of my life" says Siciliano. "By interacting with the environment and people who I care about and sending these images into the world, I'm building a continuously evolving portrait of my experiences in the city."



Bernardo Siciliano, *Panic Attack*, 2015, Oil on canvas,
94 x 71 in.

Please contact Aicon Gallery (Harry@Aicongallery.com) for more information.