

A SPACE

smoke break

March 6 – March 15, 2026

13 Grattan St, #402, Brooklyn, New York



Richard Medina, *Just Temptation*, 2025. 4.5 x 6"

Exhibiting Artists

Anna Cho
Brian St Cyr
Claire A. Baker
Cyprian Szablak
I Chin Sung
jiwoong
Julia Riguerra
Kay Zeng
Keegan Stewart
Ketty Haolin Zhang
Kutay Tufekci
Madeleine Eggen
Nicola Golightly
Rachel Deakin
Richard Medina
Sofia Arév
Yasmin Lindemann

Curator

Colleen Dalusong

Opening Reception: March 6th, 5-7pm

New York, NY — A Space Gallery is pleased to present “smoke break,” a group exhibition featuring artists Anna Cho, Brian St Cyr, Claire A. Baker, Cyprian Szablak, I Chin Sung, jiwoong, Julia Riguerra, Kay Zeng, Keegan Stewart, Ketty Haolin Zhang, Kutay Tufekci, Madeleine Eggen, Nicola Golightly, Rachel Deakin, Richard Medina, Sofia Arév, and Yasmin Lindemann.

Sometimes the best part of the party is stepping out for a smoke break. During the six minutes it takes to smoke a cigarette, anything can happen: strangers confess things to one another that they would never admit to their closest friends, long-forgotten anecdotes are resuscitated for a good laugh, and fiery opinions are exchanged. This fleeting intimacy and connection may only last for a brief moment, but the memory lingers like the scent of tobacco on your clothes.

Together, the artists in this exhibition reflect upon the beauty of impermanence and vulnerability, the tension between pleasure and sin, the ritualistic nature of striking up a conversation, and the urge for something to take the edge off.

Brian St Cyr works with discarded cigarette packs to create elaborate sculptures that stand as a testament to the small gestures and short-lived interactions that often go overlooked during our daily routines. Works such as *Red Unicorn* and *Camel Blue* convert empty Marlboro and Camel boxes into little reliquaries which carry the trace of human presence. Similarly, Anna Cho's *24 scented encounters* is a record of twenty-four different instances in which the artist offered a cigarette trade with a stranger. The act of trading cigarettes thus became the catalyst for conversation and connection, allowing both parties to become more vulnerable with one another over the course of a single smoke break together.

Cyprian Szablak's *I need a cigarette* draws parallels between the adult's cigarette and the child's pacifier. Szablak observes that both objects promise relief and regulate emotions, and creates a 3D-rendered tableaux that blurs the lines between seeking comfort and satisfying an overwhelming craving. Through this work, Szablak leans into exaggeration and dark humor to question if addiction is directly tied to a substance itself, or if it's really just a learned habit formed out of childhood instinct.

Richard Medina creates paintings about devils as a way to process the depravity of our current times and find catharsis. The devils function as anachronisms that emerge from the ancient binary of good and evil to confront our contemporary society, simultaneously acting as tormentors and confessors that hold up a mirror to the chaos and cruelty that mark our current reality. The ash, embers, and smoke in *Just Temptation* and *Frenemy Distinction* evoke imagery of hellfire and inferno, condemning the paintings' subjects to a shared burden, collective punishment, yet also mirth in the face of evil. This unique moment that is endured together is not only reminiscent of hell, but also of the smoke break itself.

A Space, founded in 2024, is a pioneering incubator dedicated to discovering and supporting emerging artists in the contemporary art world. As a forward-thinking platform, we provide young talents with the space and opportunities to experiment, grow, and connect with a wider audience. Through collaborations with visionary artists and brands, we curate cutting-edge exhibitions, immersive art events, and dynamic cultural experiences that push the boundaries of artistic expression. More than just a gallery, A Space Gallery is a hub for creativity, dialogue, and innovation, shaping the future of contemporary art.