

**MAGGIE  
HALL  
LOVE  
YOU  
TO  
DEATH**

**05.05 \_\_ 15.11 2026**

**EXHIBITION**

**PALAZZO PRIULI BON**

Santa Croce, 1979/A, 30135 Venezia VE, Italy

**DOMUS CIVICA**

Calle de le Sechere, 3082, 30125 Venezia VE, Italy

# MAGGIE HALL

# LOVE YOU TO DEATH

Text by Caterina Avataneo

## The exhibition's title, *Love You to Death*, speaks of intensities and contradictions to be sustained, not resolved.

*Love You to Death* marks the first presentation in Italy of the work of Canadian artist Maggie Hall. The exhibition unfolds across two venues in Venice—Palazzo Priuli Bon and Domus Civica—and introduces the artist's engagement with both the heritage of Pop Art and contemporary image circulation, while remaining rooted in painting as a physical and time-intensive labour process. The show includes recent and newly produced artworks combining image and text, spanning painting and neon, where personal experience and black humour converge into a visual language at odds with the imagery it draws upon.

Hall's paintings feel familiar: sunlit villas with turquoise swimming pools, manicured gardens, palm trees and open skies evoke that chummy vision of mid-century American life, somewhere between Hockneyan suspension, real estate advertising, and Hollywood cinema. Reassuring pastel tones dominate the scene, inhabited by equally collected pin-up-ish women with blonde blow-dries and impeccable style. Only in Hall's

paintings is something off: a house burns in the background, a nuclear explosion bursts at the horizon. Unaware of the turmoil behind them, the figures keep their smiles fixed as if posing for a photo. Even when turned towards the flames their body language reads calm, letting the absence of reaction unsettle the image. The insistence on normalcy creeps in, and unveils that false sense of security of the polished iconography employed. Its sense of nostalgia does not refer to lived experience so much as to a repertoire of endlessly staged Western optimism. This is further achieved through the use of text. Bold and glittery slogans appear superimposed onto both the images and black backgrounds, occupying the whole pictorial space. Drawing from the rhetoric of meme culture, self-deprecating and hyperbolic, the messages quickly undo their meanings, turning affirmation into something closer to denial. Again, something feels off. Even more so when invited to *Look on the Bright Side*.

What emerges is a form of immediacy that is, in fact, deeply mediated. The use of AI gains coherence, intensifying such logic. The mid-century lifestyle imagery Hall draws upon is no longer simply reproduced: it exists through infinite variation and regurgitated near-duplicates, carefully crafted through a system of prompts, and thousands of discarded attempts. Once the image is established, its repetition is carried into the systematic production procedure at the basis of Hall's paintings. Each composition is broken down into CMYK halftone patterns, and rebuilt through thousands of meticulously hand-applied acrylic dots. Cyan, magenta, and

yellow are sprayed with an airbrush while black is deposited with a pastry bag—no wonder Hall comes from a culinary background. The technique demands extreme precision because even a minimal variation in dot-size or placement can compromise the whole image, mistakes becoming more visible from a distance than up close. If from afar the paintings appear smooth and digitally flat, at close range, they reveal a dense, tactile surface of raised pigment. What reads as machinic and detached, is in contrast the result of a prolonged commitment and a patient human labour.

The artist began developing this body of work during a period marked by profound emotional upheaval. The sudden loss of her father coincided with the intensity and joy of the first years of motherhood, producing a condition in which overwhelming emotional states coexisted without resolution. She chose to reduce painting to a sequence of repeated gestures. Translating the image into thousands of dots, Hall established a form of detachment: holding shattering experience at bay, while still remaining in it. The work emerges within and is nourished by this tension, allowing loss and grief to coexist with care and continuity, remaining present. The recurrence of fire acquires an existential tone, expressing trauma and the lasting fear of an ending that cannot be deferred. Its flames are not to be intended as catastrophic events that disrupt the atmosphere of the image as they simply belong to it, like the clear water or the sunny days. The exhibition's title, *Love You to Death*, speaks of intensities and contradictions to be sustained, not resolved.

Formally, Hall's work situates itself within a distinctly American lineage. The use of the dot recalls the mechanical retinos of comic-book printing, also central to Roy Lichtenstein's paintings, while the direct and declarative presence of text echoes the strategies developed by Barbara Kruger. Hall shares with both artists an interest in visual languages tied to advertising and mass production, which she contextualises into the present via the use of AI and then personalises with her slow and precise production process. It is especially through black humour that the personal dimension of Hall's practice becomes relatable. Who hasn't identified at least for a moment with Beverly Sutphin? Exactly as in John Waters's *Serial Mum*, the persistence of the mid-century ideal remains true in its crumbling. Its re-enactment being reassuring, needed, tragic and ironic all at once. Hall embraces such complexity of the real: she draws from collective imagination only to subtly interfere with it, shifting its tone toward a point of artificial exaggeration that mirrors the same production strategies employed. Ultimately the stereotyped images proposed already include a variation within them. Glitter too makes the bold statements' gleam that little extra synthetic. Its spheric units camouflaging into the CMYK hallucination of a Marilyn, a birthday cake or a pair of clowns staring perplexed from above. *Sometimes you don't get to choose your memories*. Memory after all is happening as we stand, and as Hall's father would have it: *These are the good old days*.



*Love You to Death*, 2026  
48 x 60 inches  
Acrylic on canvas

**MAGGIE HALL** **LOVE YOU TO DEATH**

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# “ The repetition of each dot gave me just enough focus to keep the grief from overwhelming me.



Maggie Hall. Photo by Phil Crozier.

*Love You to Death* brings together a body of work that initially feels accessible, even generous. On display across two venues, Palazzo Priuli Bon and Domus Civica. Maggie Hall draws on visual vocabulary that feels familiar, optimistic, mid-century, almost cinematic in its softness. But that first read doesn't hold for long. Stay with the work and the surface begins to shift. What appears effortless reveals itself as tightly controlled, even exacting.

Using a series of tiny dots placed by hand, each work emerges through her CMYK process: first with an airbrush in yellow, magenta, and cyan applied directly onto the canvas, and then overtop, black dots, raised slightly from the surface, are applied using a piping bag, each moderated with pressure and precision to adjust its circumference so that the overall image resolves into its subject.

This process functions less as a stylistic flourish and more as a self-imposed discipline. It narrows the field, and in doing so, heightens everything that remains. The images don't just depict feeling, they feel constructed under pressure. It would be easy to call this nostalgia, but Hall doesn't quite let it settle there. The past she references isn't offered as something to return to. It's closer to something intercepted, slowed down, and quietly unsettled. The softness is still there, but it's no longer entirely trustworthy. There's a tension between wanting to hold onto something and knowing, at some level, that it can't be held.

The exhibition moves beyond painting as well, into text, surface, and light. A neon work draws from a phrase attributed to Hall's father before his death: "These are the good old days." In this context, it lands differently. It reads less like reassurance and more like a reminder, or even a subtle directive. The sentiment remains sincere, but it carries more weight. It asks you to consider the present not as something passing by, but as something already in the process of becoming memory.

## OPENING RECEPTION

**MAY 5 | 3:00 – 5:00 PM**

Palazzo Priuli Bon

## IN CONVERSATION

**Jeanne Beker & Maggie Hall**

**MAY 5 | 2:00 – 3:00 PM**

Palazzo Venart, Calle Tron, 1961, 30135 Venezia VE, Italy

Continuing their 2025 dialogue, Jeanne Beker and Maggie Hall reconvene in Venice to examine image culture, femininity, performance, and emotional inheritance.

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