

VENUS

MANHATTAN LOS ANGELES

Fort Greene

Curated by **Adrienne Rubenstein**

Opening Saturday, September 17, 4 – 7PM

September 17 – October 29, 2016

VENUS

601 S. Anderson Street

Los Angeles, CA 90023



(Los Angeles, CA) – VENUS is pleased to present *Fort Greene*, an exhibition curated by **Adrienne Rubenstein**. The show will feature over 90 works across media by 27 established and emerging artists.

Rubenstein, a curator, painter and director at CANADA in New York, assembled the show as an homage to the artists and artworks that she most admires. One could perhaps think of it as the curatorial manifestation of her art world family tree. The show maps a web of connections between artists whose paths have crossed in different places at different points in time. The network itself is composed of art historical narratives, stylistic or thematic similarities, overlapping projects, shared educational backgrounds and work experience, or common gallery representations - and as a product of all of these functions, a network of friendships.

Fort Greene chronicles the importance of generating and maintaining a creative network. **Katherine Bernhardt's** large, loose colorful paintings of everyday objects return to VENUS following her beautiful solo show at the gallery's New York space in 2015. Bernhardt's paintings of every day objects are an outpouring of her experience and imagination; embedded within a vibrant colorfield they create an imprecise pattern. Sketched on canvas in a stream of consciousness, the elements are then outlined with spray paint and filled-in with thinned acrylic in an all-in-one-shot technique.

Another CANADA painter, **Katherine Bradford's** work will also be included. Bradford's paintings commonly depict celestial landscapes filled with nymph-like swimmers, soft figures and mysticism. She uses odd humor, interior logic, and palimpsest-like surfaces—evidence of her working everything out on the canvas, to create paintings of abstract characters in imaginary worlds.

The tie dyed wooden, metal and fabric sculptures by the celebrated artist **Sarah Braman** are not only a major highlight of the exhibition, but also tell the story of Rubenstein's friendship and working relationship with Braman. In addition to her own celebrated practice as an artist, Braman is quietly a founder and partner at CANADA. Braman creates abstract geometric sculptures and paintings in a distinctive color palette of rich pinks, blues, and purples, in which she simultaneously foregrounds the formal qualities of her materials while referring to her own personal narrative.

Vancouver-based **Elizabeth McIntosh** contributes two new paintings which reference scenes from nature reminiscent of Klee and Matisse. **Monique Mouton**, a former student of McIntosh's at Emily Carr, will show new work on paper and a two dimensional floor piece, a continuation of her critically praised debut exhibition in New York last January. Layered with watercolor and pigment, Mouton's paintings convey with tender emotion the feeling of landscape you would travel 10,000 miles to see.

Ryan Johnson's bird-like wooden and metal forms, while structurally static, seem to dance and move, cutting upwards through space and into the air. At times recalling a classical bust, fiber sculptor **Josh Blackwell's** intricate woven forms writhe and glow with veins of fabric and thread bound together within thin metal frames upon

wooden bases. Beloved ceramicist **Sally Saul** crafts a fantastical woodland story in clay including a family of five foxes, cardinals, frogs, toads and even a singing bluejay.

Bella Foster's watercolors are vibrant and detailed depictions of every day domestic spaces. Often inspired by visits to her friends' homes or rooms she has read about in books and magazines, Foster's paintings are compellingly intimate. They explode with pattern, light and color, emphasizing the joy of repetition, order, and the extraordinary in the spirit of illustrator Josef Frank.

Al Freeman will revisit the gallery's expansive exterior wall with a series of small repetitive murals borrowed from children's artwork about water preservation. This will be the second mural completed at VENUS LA following Katherine Bernhardt's 2015 project, *Fruit Salad*.

Viewers can also look forward to new names and exciting artist discoveries, including video artist, **Becky James**; the painted assemblages of **Annelie McKenzie**; comical ceramicist **John DeFazio**; New York-based sculptor, **Max Heiges'** human size steel forms and furniture; and cookie caricature artist **Rebecca Levitan**, who sculpts cult figures' faces into edible treats.

Eight works from the estate of self-taught Canadian painter, **Gladys Johnston** (1906-1983) will be exhibited in the US for the first time. Johnston, the heart of the exhibition, was a geographically sequestered yet ambitious painter whose renderings of life on the homestead embody aspects of the Canadian canon and the peculiar sensitivity of women artists who practiced outside of established norms.

It is Rubenstein's deep and thoughtful appreciation for each artist and their work that is the true foundation of *Fort Greene*. As a painter and sculptor, she has insulated her own practice among the dialogues and encouragement of her peers. It is with this knowledge and artist community that Rubenstein so successfully curates exhibitions such as *Fort Greene*.

The entire list of artists in *Fort Greene*, includes: **Katherine Bernhardt, Josh Blackwell, Sarah Braman, Katherine Bradford, Alex Chaves, John DeFazio, Bella Foster, Al Freeman, Jess Fuller, Alicia Gibson, Joanne Greenbaum, Max Heiges, Chris Hood, Dan Ivic, Becky James, Ryan Johnson, Gladys Johnston, Elisabeth Kley, Sadie Laska, Rebecca Levitan, Adam Marnie, Elizabeth McIntosh, Annelie McKenzie, Monique Mouton, Tyson Reeder, Sally Saul, and Jason Stopa**. With special thanks to Chris Cran, CANADA, and all the contributing galleries and artists.

ABOUT ADRIANNE RUBENSTEIN

Adrienne Rubenstein (b. 1983) was born in Montreal, Canada. She attended Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and received her MFA at the San Francisco Art Institute. Previous curatorial projects include *Forget About the Sweetbreads* at James Fuentes with Joanne Greenbaum (2013), *Snail Salon* at Regina Rex (2013), *If you throw a spider out the window, does it break?* at Brennan & Griffin (2014), and *Maraschino* at Fourteen30 Contemporary (2015). Her paintings have been shown in solo exhibitions at White Columns, New York; Halsey McKay, East Hampton; and David Petersen, Minneapolis. Upcoming solo presentations include *The Pit*, Los Angeles; Fourteen30 Contemporary, Portland; *Stems*, Brussels; and *NADA* with *Stems* in Miami Beach. Rubenstein has received enthusiastic reviews—both for her paintings and curatorial projects—from Roberta Smith of the *New York Times*, and was named an artist to watch by *Harper's Bazaar*. She is a director at CANADA gallery, and currently lives and works in New York.

ABOUT VENUS

Founded in 2012 by Adam Lindemann and with spaces in both Manhattan and Los Angeles, VENUS is dedicated to curated exhibitions both historic and contemporary, which cast a unique and often iconoclastic view on the work of established artists or artists whose works have been somewhat overlooked. The gallery continues to collaborate with prominent artists, foundations, estates, and galleries.