



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Fuel and Lumber Company Presents: 8

Allison Grant

Alicia Henry

Fawn Krieger

Melora Kuhn

Sarah Lasley

Mary Laube

Katarina Riesing

Las Hermanas Iglesias

On view: November 4, 2022 - January 14, 2023

Reception: November 4, 5-9pm

Laney Contemporary is pleased to present *8*, a group exhibition guest-curated by The Fuel and Lumber Company. This special selection of diverse artists presents no singular voice, but rather a chorus of works by female-identifying artists. In a challenging contemporary moment, with a post-Roe v. Wade reality, the curatorial initiative, The Fuel and Lumber Company takes a broad philosophical, even poetic, approach to curating, placing works next to one another without didactics, but as a way to encourage dialog amongst images and between viewers. Art opens doors by posing questions rather than determining answers and *8* opens up unlimited questions about complexities of identity and control of bodies. The artists were chosen for their distinct visual voices, engaging in cross-cultural dialog, but also for their unexpectedly united harmony.

The number 8, itself a visual symbol of infinity, suggests an array of meanings including the flow of power, a source of good energy, and a strong sense of overcoming. Turned on its side, 8 symbolizes limitlessness, which in the context of this show may remind us of the immeasurable capacity of what art can accomplish and what creative people united can realize. It also suggests the unlimited and undefined possibilities of meanings that can be produced by viewer-participants in dialog with one another.

In *After Derek Jarman*, Melora Kuhn's oil painting on paper, a woman releases a sunset scream, a close-cousin of the one by Edvard Munch. In fact, it may be a scream, or perhaps a roar, the language used shifts its interpretation significantly. Her existential howl silently rips through the gallery as she tears at the bodice of her restrictive Victorian gown, itself inseparable from the fiery oranges of the wide open landscape.

The gaping wide open mouths of Alicia Henry's faces made of mixed media on panel remind us of the power of the open mouth: to vocalize, to sing, to share, to see something and say something, to talk back, to shout. In all of its iterations the image is decisive and interactive, affecting both the individual and the group. Beautiful as singular and unstoppable as many, these voices seem to embody the diasporic and limitless energy of collective vocalizations.

Loose Lips, one of two knit paintings in the show that deal with reproductive justice by creative duo Las Hermanas Iglesias, transforms feeling into pattern employing vintage, store-bought and hand-dyed yarns. The slang phrase "loose lips sink ships" looms in this context of dialog about the power of the shared word. And in a photo-installation, Las Hermanas Iglesias embrace the impossible muteness of the camera to speak volumes through their shared, very direct stares at the viewer. Entitled *Commiserates* and taken over many years, they document *and* create, leaning into the commonality of experiences and the deep bond of transformation, joys, and losses that can come from pregnancy, abortion, and potential infertility. The direct expression of their doubled, tripled, and quadrupled bodies speak more adamantly than words could accomplish.

Sarah Lasley's award-winning solo film *The Iimagemaker* as both performance art and experimental cinema tackles the framed form of filmic looking and the to-be-looked-at-ness of being a woman. Screened in the gallery's mirrored room, self-consciousness itself is on display as a Vegas showgirl in full, hot-pink, feathery regalia sees herself seeing and being seen as she moves through desert and wooded naturescapes. The looping infinity of voyeurism presents a heavy, even violent, weight as the body moves from artifice into wilderness, as if seeking to shed or escape a Sisyphean burden in order to find a Self released.

Wilderness and photography have a long intertwined history and Allison Grant's photographs add to that history the bittersweet balance of childhood experienced within the compromised nature of a planet in crisis. The complexities of a land that is beautiful and laden with toxins, particulates, and industrial waste sites composes a delicate frame of tension in contact with the tenderness of caregiving and protection; an infinite tapestry of blooming purple wisteria engulfs and enchants the figures dwarfed by expanses of nature and the implied man-made forces upon them.

Fawn Krieger's sculptures entitled *Experiment in Resistance* extend a related tension through a material balance of ceramic and cement, form and framed space. The physicality of smooth and rough, geometric in part, but also oozing beyond the possibility of containment; materials in these free-standing works proxy for the haptic qualities of bodies and ruptures, pressures, perfections and flaws, all of which can be deeply *felt* in Krieger's work rather than explained away.

Katarina Riesing's embroidered locks of hair on silk crepe de chine engage the human link between touch and sight. As children, when we see we want to touch, as a way to know. These golden braids pull us in and then push us away as skin reveals the realism of medical illustration and television gore. The false idealisms and fairy tales of the body are rendered in embroidery - traditionally associated with the in-home containment of women's creative energies.

Mary Laube's acrylic on panel work entitled *Attendant* provides a chilling subtext linking a number of ideas in the exhibition which insinuate a watchful eye: an internalized sense of being seen, a centuries-old voyeurism, frames or limitations placed upon the female-identifying subject, or the outside control of bodies all of which are resisted in works that convey the limitless visions of artists' voices, fiercely independent and then also, as needed, united.

The Fuel and Lumber Company

In our collective past, most American towns had a fuel and lumber company to provide basic goods and services. Believing art and culture to be among the needs vital to the health of any community, artists Amy Pleasant and Pete Schulte founded The Fuel And Lumber Company in Birmingham, Alabama to facilitate exhibitions and related programming in the Southeast and beyond. The Fuel And Lumber Company is an idea, not a traditional brick and mortar space, dedicated to contemporary art and community engagement.

Reception details:

Our reception for Pete Schulte and The Fuel and Lumber Company's group curated exhibition, *8*, will take place on Friday, November 4th from 5 to 9pm with a food truck on premises.

Gallery hours and contact information:

Tuesday - Friday, 11-5 pm

Saturday, 11-2 pm

and by appointment

Phone: (912) 438-4442

Email: info@laneycontemporary.com

Address: 1810 Mills B. Lane Blvd, Savannah, GA 31405

Image above:

Mary Laube, *Shadowbox*, 2018, acrylic on panel, 14 x 11 inches