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Fringe

Natalie Baxter, Cynthia Carlson, Max Colby, Pamela Council, Amir H. Fallah, Valerie Jaudon, Future Retrieval,
Justine Hill, Judy Ledgerwood, Ree Morton, Josie Love Roebuck, Amanda Valdez

July 8 - August 20, 2021

Denny Dimin Gallery is pleased to announce *Fringe*, a group exhibition featuring twelve artists at the gallery's New York location, on view from July 8th to August 20th, 2021.

Fringe was inspired by recent exhibitions of the Pattern and Decoration (P & D) art movement from the 1970s and its resonance and resurgence with many contemporary artists. The movement's privileging of materials such as textiles and ceramics, its promotion of female artists and its interest in domestic space as a place for creativity, all connect it strongly to the concerns of contemporary artists half a century later.

P & D exalted the artists, mediums, cultures, and aesthetics the then current artworld snubbed. It sought out what was on the periphery, on the fringe of mainstream and turned it on its head. The references to fabric design, quilting, stained glass, manuscripts, textiles, pottery, mosaics, embroidery and most non-Western Art, continue to proliferate in the works of contemporary artists and upend traditional art historical narratives.

In her essay introducing a seminal exhibition on P & D, Anna Katz points out that it is not wholly satisfying to declare it an anti-minimalist movement, as there were many formal connections, such as an interest in architecture and in repetition and the grid. What was significantly challenged was instead the hierarchies of importance assigned to fine art over decorative art, and the significant codification of this in institutional and academic settings.¹

Fifty years later, the challenge P & D posed to institutional art history and the market for non-white, non-male artists continue to be a struggle for contemporary artists. Only 14% of all exhibitions at 26 prominent U.S. museums over the past decade were of work by women artists.² A data analysis of 18 major U.S. art museums found that their collections are 87% male and 85% white.³ The deployment of materials and approaches that are coded female or are by artists of diverse backgrounds continues to be a way to challenge this status quo.

¹"P & D unsettled and troubled the coding by the academic, the discipline of art history, the museum, and the market of the wide range of arts historically associated with women's traditional activities in the home and non-Western cultures as decorative and thus secondary, or worse." Anna Katz, *Lessons in Promiscuity: Patterning and the New Decorativeness in Art of the 1970s and 1980s*.

²Julia Halperin and Charlotte Burns, "Museums Claim They're Paying More Attention to Female Artists. That's an Illusion," *Artnet*, from the series "Women's Place in the Art World." September 19, 2019.

³Chad Topaz, Bernhard Klingenberg, Daniel Turek, Brianna Heggeseth, Pamela Harris, Julie C. Blackwood, C. Ondine Chavoya, Steven Nelson, Kevin M. Murphy. "Diversity of Artists in Major U.S. Museums," *Public Library of Science (PLOS)*. Published March 20, 2019.

One radical element of P & D was its commitment to unveiling the realm of the domestic. Private life could become public art. Pattern acted as a visualization of the repetition of daily life. Its unabashed presentation of mundane daily labors, sewing, floral arrangement, sitting and drafting from the kitchen table, have never been more relevant than from our present moment, when our domestic routines have become all encompassing, endless, and unprecedentedly challenging. Many artists have had no choice but to embrace the kitchen table as art studio.

Natalie Baxter (b. 1985, Kentucky) explores concepts of place-identity, nostalgic americana, and gender stereotypes through sculptures that playfully push controversial issues. Baxter uses traditionally feminine craft techniques to create cartoonishly soft objects, such as weapons and flags. Her colorful work holds up a fun-house mirror to ideas of aggression and masculinity. Baxter received her MFA from the University of Kentucky in 2012 and a BA in Fine Art from the University of the South in Sewanee, TN in 2007. Her work has been exhibited in galleries and museums internationally with recent shows at Birmingham Museum of Art (Birmingham, AL), Spring/Break Art Show with Gloria's (New York, NY), Institute 193 (Lexington, KY), Yale University (New Haven, CT), and Brandeis University (Waltham, MA). She has been an artist in residency at the Wassaic Project, a fellowship recipient at the Vermont Studio Center, and twice awarded the Queens Art Fund Grant.

Cynthia Carlson (b. 1942, Illinois) is a painter and was a pioneer of the Pattern and Decoration group in the 1970s. Her work is in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Guggenheim Museum, and the Queens Museum in New York; the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and elsewhere. She is a four-time winner of the Professional Staff Congress-City University of New York Research Award and a recipient of the 1987 National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship. She has taught at the University of Colorado, Boulder; the University of the Arts in Philadelphia; and Queens College in New York, where she is a professor emeritus.

Max Colby (b. 1990, Florida) reframes traditional notions of domesticity, power, and gender from a trans and non-binary perspective through their work. Colby's work activates these materials through political tactics of camp, issuing a call to reimagine our relationship to gender, sex, class, and the mundane. Their queer interventions harness intimacy and fantasy, providing new experiences and systems. Colby received their BFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Tufts University in 2012. Recent group exhibitions include *Figuring the Floral* at Wave Hill, *Dissolution* at the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art, *A Body of Work* at Jane Lombard Gallery, *Cuir* at Isabel Croxatto Galería, *Rijswijk Textile Biennial* at Museum Rijswijk, and *Tableau Vivant* at Spring/Break. In 2019, they were an artist in residence at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York and a Leslie-Lohman Museum Fellow.

Pamela Council (b. 1986, New York) is an interdisciplinary artist creating work in tribute to Black joy. Guided by material, cultural, and metaphysical quests, Council's practice embodies a darkly humorous and inventive Afro-Americana camp aesthetic, BLAXIDERM. Through this lens, Council uses sculpture, architecture, writing, and performance to make dedications and monuments that provide relief for grief and shed light on under-valued narratives. Council holds an MFA from Columbia University and a BA from Williams College. They have presented work at the New Museum for Contemporary Art, United States Library of Congress, Schomburg Center for

Research in Black Culture, Studio Museum in Harlem, and MoCADA. Council has been Artist-in-Residence at MacDowell, Red Bull Arts, Bemis, Rush Arts, MANA, Signal Culture, Mass MoCA, and Wassaic Project.

Amir H. Fallah (b. 1979, Iran) works across painting, installation, drawing and sculpture investigates the complexities of belonging and otherness in the very place one calls home. Fallah's work is of analogously global ancestry, influenced by the pattern and detail of Persian miniatures, the portrayals of class and domestic life of 17th century Dutch Art, and the brashness and saturation of American visual culture. Fallah received his MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles and his BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore. Fallah has had solo exhibitions at the ICA San Jose, MOCA Tucson, South Dakota Art Museum, Schneider Museum of Art, and Nerman Museum of Art; in addition to numerous international group exhibitions including *We Must Risk Delight: Twenty Artists* from Los Angeles, 56th La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy (2015) and the 9th Sharjah Biennial, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (2009). Fallah's work is in the collections of the Perez Art Museum, Miami, Smart Museum of Art, Chicago, the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, McEvoy Foundation for the Arts, San Francisco, and the Microsoft Collection.

Valerie Jaudon (b. 1945, Mississippi) has been committed to redefining the parameters of abstraction. Her painting practice evokes motifs and the embellishments of folk art, decorative arts, and non-Western traditions of abstraction. The works often use symmetric compositions comprised of repetitive, patterned forms that span the entire surface of a work. More recently, Jaudon has explored how to compose her figures using single, continuous bands of paint. All of her works are part of an ongoing exploration of systems, and in using simple elements to create visually complex images. She is also known for painting with a highly limited palette of two or three colors at a time. Jaudon's work has been included in several national and international museum exhibitions focusing on the Pattern and Decoration movement. In addition, Jaudon is the recipient of numerous awards and grants and her work has been collected by and exhibited in major museums. Among them are The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC; McNay Art Museum, San Antonio; St. Louis Art Museum, St. Louis; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Städel Museum, Frankfurt, Germany; the Louisiana Museum of Modern art, Humlebaek, Denmark; Ludwig Forum Internationale Kunst, Aachen, Germany.

Future Retrieval (b. 1980, Arkansas, b. 1978, Oklahoma) is a collaboration between Katie Parker and Guy Michael Davis. Future Retrieval utilize three-dimensional scanning and digital manufacturing of found forms that are molded and constructed in porcelain, mimicking the history of decorative arts and design. Their process addresses the conceptualization, discovery, and acquisition of form, to make content-loaded sculptures that reference design and are held together by craft. They incorporate an interdisciplinary approach to their work, striving to make influential historic objects relevant to today. Both Parker and Davis received their MFA from The Ohio State University and BFA from Kansas City Art Institute, MO. Their most recent solo exhibitions include *Close Parallel* at the Cincinnati Art Museum (2021), *Permanent Spectacle* at Denny Gallery (2017) and the Fuller Craft Museum in Brockton, MA (2017). Their work is held in numerous collections such as Arizona State University Ceramics Research Center (Tempe, AR), Cincinnati Art Museum (Cincinnati, OH), 21C Museum/Hotel (Durham, NC), Society of Dresden Porcelain Art (Friedtal, Germany), and The Pottery Workshop (Jingdezhen, China).

Justine Hill (b. 1985, New York) explores the boundaries of abstract painting with her unique approach to form and mark making. She styles her paintings on shaped wood panels wrapped in canvas. The way she chooses to arrange the pieces, how the shapes relate to one another, and the negative spaces within and around them, are all essential to the work. Hill received her MFA from the University of Pennsylvania and her BA from the College of

the Holy Cross. Her work is in significant collections including Donatella Versace, The Davis Museum (Wellesley, MA) and The Columbus Metropolitan Library (Columbus, OH), among others.

Judy Ledgerwood (b. Indiana, 1959) is a Chicago-based painter whose canvases and wall painting installations confront the history of abstract painting. Her work simultaneously considers domestically created decorative work made by women across cultures. Compositions consist of motifs that are derived from symbolic shapes associated with Paleo and Neolithic Goddess cultures throughout Europe. The vocabulary of shapes featured in her work is comprised of circles, quatrefoils, and a seed-like shapes organized within triangles and chevrons that she perceives as a womanly ciphers symbolic of feminine power. Ledgerwood received a BFA from the Art Academy of Cincinnati and a MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has held numerous solo exhibitions, most recently at The Graham Foundation and Smart Museum of Art, Chicago, IL, Tracy Williams Ltd, New York, Barbara Davis Gallery, Houston, TX, Hausler Contemporary, Austria, and Rhona Hoffman Gallery, among many others. Judy Ledgerwood's work is included in prominent public collections including the Art Institute of Chicago, IL, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, the Milwaukee Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, and the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen Switzerland, among others.

Ree Morton (b. 1936, New York; d. 1977, Chicago) worked in a variety of mediums including sculpture, drawing, and installation and utilized everyday decorative objects, such as curtains, ruffles, and swags, to create a sense of humor and "confrontational innocence" for which her work became famous for. Morton received a BFA in Fine Arts from the University of Rhode Island in 1968 and an MFA from Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia in 1970. Solo exhibitions during her lifetime include projects at Artists Space, New York (1973); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1974); and South Street Seaport Museum, New York (1975). Morton was included in the 1973 and 1977 Whitney Biennials. She has had major retrospectives at the New Museum, New York (1980); Generali Foundation, Vienna (2008); The Drawing Center, New York (2009); and the Reina Sofia, Madrid (2015).

Josie Love Roebuck (b. 1995, Tennessee) is an interdisciplinary artist from Chattanooga, TN. She received her B.F.A with an emphasis in drawing and painting, from the University of Georgia (2019), and her M.F.A at the University of Cincinnati in 2021. Roebuck combines embroidery and painting to create intimate portraits of survivors of rape. Her paintings re-create the emotional narratives of the victims she depicts and asks the viewer to consider the difficult reality of overcoming and healing from trauma. Her process addresses the contemporary complexity of identifying as biracial through symbolizing pain and triumph, exclusion, and acceptance. The act of Roebuck sewing together portraits has allowed her canvas to become her paper and her needle to become her pen, in order for Roebuck to draw upon the past and present to convey a story of her experiences and her family's experiences. She has exhibited her work at Christie's at Rockefeller Plaza (NY), NADA House (NY), LatchKey Gallery (NY), Contemporary Arts Center (OH), Untitled Art Fair with Denny Dimin Gallery (online), Site: Brooklyn Gallery (NY), and Strohl Art Center (NY).

Amanda Valdez (b. 1982, Washington) works in a matrix of gestures, styles, and materials referring to visual cultures that are both western and non-western. Valdez pulls on a variety of histories, from quilting and sewing, to tiling and brick-laying, to virtuoso gestural painting. Her works operate as a reflection of the body, and the histories that the body holds in its physical makeup: scars, sags, symmetries and asymmetries, and a lifetime of emotions. Valdez received her MFA from Hunter College in New York City and BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her most recent solo exhibitions include *Gratitude* at Denny Dimin Gallery, *Piecework* at the Heckscher Museum of Art in Huntington, New York, *Rattle Around* at KOKI Arts in Tokyo, *Wild Child* at the Landing

Gallery in Los Angeles, and Ladies' Night at the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College. Her work is included in the collections of the Heckscher Museum of Art, the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College, Davis Museum at Wellesley College, and Time Equities, Inc. in New York.