

FLORA AND FAUNA
MAR 17-MAY 7, 2023

Reception on Sunday, May 7, 3-6 PM

1053 Gallery is pleased to present *Flora and Fauna*, an exhibition of 26 artists who work in and around the Catskills Mountains of New York or who engage the regional biodiversity in their artmaking practice. Curated by Ryan Steadman and Haley Mellin, local biodiversity is a focus of this group show. 1053 Gallery is located in the town of Fleischmanns in the Catskill Mountains, an area with a history of environmental recovery and storied forests and watersheds. The exhibition will run from March 17 through May 7, with a public reception on May 7, 2023. Proceeds from the exhibition will support land conservation through the artist-run nonprofit Art into Acres.

Ranging in medium, the works all engage *flora and fauna*, terminology defined as the plants and animals in a region or time, and collectively referred to as *biota*. Detailed species and habitat renderings by Isabella Kirkland, Tiffany Bozic, Haley Mellin and Angela Rose Voulgarelis depict the natural world in the human era. Works by Chris Martin, Ryan Steadman and James Fils-Aime look at the human species in the context of its surroundings. The human and nature interface comes into focus with works like Brian Caverly's *Untitled Stool*, 2020-2022, carved from trees that fell near his home upstate and new pieces by Emily Pettigrew, Lisa Sanditz and John Garcia that are embedded with cultural or built structures.

Some works feature reclamation. In *Six Phases of Forest Procession (for the Budding Bird Blind)*, 2020, David Brooks investigates how the natural world cannot be divorced from cultural concerns. The sculptural models exhibited depict phases of forest succession (a process by which a forest moves through expansion and reduction). Continuing with the theme of regeneration, and adding fantasy, Sarah Rose Sharp uses reclaimed materials in *That You May Have the Pleasure of Listening*, 2021-23, and writes, "Like most of my work, this piece is about the reconfiguration of found materials, transmuting what is into what can be. It's also about epic painting and luring sailors to their inevitable death through desire."

An early work by Loie Hollowell underscores growth and reproduction cycles as a formative power; her examination of the fertility of the natural world serves as a precursor to the internal gardens she later explores. Artists engaging the abstraction of life such as Graham Collins, Jennie Jieun Lee, Ryan Wallace, Uman and Tamara Gonzales hone in on core forms, shapes and biological motifs that build as they repeat, often punctuated by vibrant colors. In harmony with this, artist and curator Jesse Greenberg focuses on diversity and endless patterns, which aligns with the surrealism in single-species works by Jo Nigoghossian and Carl D'Alvia.

Narrative integrates with the biosphere as well. Dan Colen painted *Forest (Mother)*, during four years ranging from 2016-2020, on the challenge of trying to depict nature as it exists in our modern world, he says, "Disney is a filter for me as I try to paint nature and the sublime... and understand my relationship to those things." Nodding to the poetry of storytelling, Louis Eisner writes of his work *Lonesome Lover*, 2022, "There is an American folk tradition in music which takes place in the forest: timber hymns. Paintings like these are visual representations which come from this lineage. Songs like 'Buckeye Jim,' 'Trail of the Lonesome Pine,' and even 'Snake Baked a Hoecake.' I feel that the painting has a lyrical aspect to it."

The anthropocenic failure is addressed in Michael St. John's, *Without action there is no change*, 2021, a two-panel painting of climate justice activist Greta Thunberg. Also citing connection to life and loss, is Javier Magri's *Memories of Green*, 2003-2020, who writes, "I painted this during a time when I felt disconnected from New York City. The towers had fallen. I remember the towers always being there across the Manhattan skyline as a child. There was a sense of wonderment which held me in place."

Towers which ascended to the stars at night and then suddenly one morning in September were gone forever. I remember dreaming of a green world and this painting is the result of that dream.”

Participating artists include: Tiffany Bozic, David Brooks, Brian Caverly, Dan Colen, Graham Collins, Carl D'Alvia, Louis Eisner, James Douglas Fils-Aime, John Garcia, Tamara Gonzales, Jesse Greenberg, Loie Hollowell, Isabella Kirkland, Jennie Jieun Lee, Javier Magri, Chris Martin, Haley Mellin, Jo Nigoghossian, Emily Pettigrew, Lisa Sanditz, Sarah Rose Sharp, Michael St. John, Ryan Steadman, Uman, Angela Rose Voulgarelis and Ryan Wallace.

About the curators: Ryan Steadman is an artist, curator and writer living in Upstate New York. Haley Mellin is an artist and land conservationist and has a studio in East Chatham, New York.

Featured images by (above) and (below). (TBD once image folder is completed Tuesday/Wednesday)

About 1053 Gallery: Founded in 2021 by Mark and Maritza Birman to focus on purposeful growth in the region, 1053 Gallery joins the burgeoning contemporary art scene in The Catskills region of Upstate New York. Representing the multidisciplinary work of emerging and mid-career artists, the gallery aspires to bridge the gap between the rural and cosmopolitan, inviting community engagement and international appeal. The gallery is directed by writer and herbalist Lindsay Comstock. Open Friday and Saturday 11AM-5PM, Sunday 12PM-4PM, and by appt.

Media contact:

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