

FRIDMAN GALLERY

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Un-becoming

ruby onyinyechi amanze
Michele Bubacco
Tamar Ettun
Brian Fernandes-Halloran

November 12 – December 10, 2016
Opening reception: Saturday, Nov. 12, 6-8pm

Thursday, December 8, 6pm: Performance by The Moving Company and artist talk moderated by Wendy Vogel, contributing writer to *Artforum* and *Art in America*.

Fridman Gallery is pleased to present *Un-becoming*, an exhibition by four groundbreaking young artists, each of whom subverts aesthetic and social biases in constructions of figural beauty in their own distinctive ways. The seemingly unfinished or fragile works are in fact formally complete, independent and sound.

The drawings of ruby onyinyechi amanze explore non-linear storytelling layered with cultural references. Expansive white (negative) space is an active participant, enveloping chimeric figures and isolating their stillness. The inherent characteristics of paper – its natural weight, how it folds into the viewers' space, the way it accumulates and absorbs marks, the book-page reference of a deckled edge – take on a physical and emotional presence. Sudden infusions of color and shifts in scale and perspective alter the psychological space, beyond the confines of the white surface and away from historical context of drawing.

Michele Bubacco has a raw, visceral approach to painting, with expressive strokes and a reductive palette that emphasize the despair of his figures. His gestural, almost violent canvases are rife with ambiguous sexuality and existential anguish. Struggling for self-definition, the figurative elements are fragmented, leaving the viewer with only a partial point of entry into their chaotic history. In Bubacco's mysteries, paint itself becomes the narrative, tension imbued in each and every daub, at once striving to define the subject's psychological profile and to cover its tracks. The resulting characters are multi-layered and deeply moving.

Tamar Ettun's *Mauve Bird with Yellow Teeth Red Feathers Green Feet and a Rose Belly* is a tetralogy of performances and videos. Each part of this ongoing body of work is named after a primary color representing an emotion. In this exhibition, Ettun premieres *Part: Yellow (Desire)*. Inverting the duality of movement/stillness, temporality/permanence, she creates durational performances in which objects and movers perform specific tasks and gradually form horizontal totems. Ettun sees stillness as an expression of trauma that damages our ability to feel empathy. When movement replaces stillness and objects acquire new meanings, we are enticed to empathize.

Brian Fernandes-Halloran's sculptures combine detritus and found objects into classical and highly emotive figures that explore the construction of memory as a mechanism to counter loss. The works evoke places and people important to the artist. The characters have deep inner vitality underscored by the discarded materials of which they are made. "I am looking for human qualities to overcome my relationship with material", says Fernandes-Halloran. His *Prospero* – a one-legged, one-armed hollow skeleton of a man – may be maimed but he is far from damaged. What he may lack in physical prowess, he makes up in vulnerable beauty, balance and grace.

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ruby onyinyechi amanze (b. Nigeria, 1982) earned an MFA from Cranbrook Academy (2006) and a BFA from the Tyler School of Art (2004). Currently, amanze is an artist-in-residence at the Queens Museum, and her work is included in Open Sessions 8 at the Drawing Center in New York. amanze lives and works in New York. She is represented by Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg.

Michele Bubacco (b. Italy, 1983) is a self-taught artist, who studied under the Venetian artist Alessandro Rossi. He is the recipient of the Premio Fondazione VAF (2016) and his work has been exhibited widely throughout Europe and the United States. Bubacco lives and works between Venice and Vienna. He is represented by Litvak Gallery, Tel Aviv.

Tamar Ettun (b. Israel, 1982) earned an MFA from Yale (2010) where she received the Alice English Kimball Fellowship. Her numerous exhibitions and performances include: The Watermill Center, Vanity Projects, eux, Transformer, NADA NYC, Madison Square Park, Indianapolis Museum of Art, PERFORMA 11, PERFORMA 09. Ettun lives and works in Brooklyn. She is the founder and director of The Moving Company.

Brian Fernandes-Halloran (b. USA, 1983) earned an MFA from Bard College (2016) and a BFA from Boston College (2008). He is the recipient of the Yale Norfolk Scholarship. His work has been shown at the New Museum and in public spaces and institutions throughout the US and abroad. Fernandez-Halloran lives and works in Brooklyn, NY, frequently collaborating with Pawel Althamer in Poland.