

## Contemporary Watercolor

Curated by Veronica Roberts  
July 12 – August 17, 2012

Reception: Thursday, July 12, 6 – 8pm

Summer Gallery Hours:  
Monday – Friday, 10 – 6pm



Kelly Inouye, *On Patrol*, 2012, watercolor on paper, 22 x 30 inches

Works by: *Firelei Báez, Laura Ball, Errol Barron, Ben Blatt, Nina Bovasso, Sarah Cain, Mark Chamberlain, Emilie Clark, Russell Crotty, Nicole Phungrasamee Fein, Mark Fox, Orly Genger, Cliff Hengst, Kelly Inouye, Kysa Johnson, Aubrey Learner, Ellen Lesperance, Carey Maxon, Kim McCarty, Sam Messenger, Aaron Morse, Amy Park, James Sterling Pitt, William Powhida, David Rathman, Laurie Reid, Maki Tamura, Nick Terry, and Julia von Eichel.*

Watercolor has been saddled with a bad rap. It hasn't even earned the status of being uncool enough to be cool. With its history as a preferred medium of amateur painters, watercolor is all too easily overlooked or disparaged for its frequent association with trivial subjects and saccharine clichés. This exhibition features a group of diverse artists from around the country and abroad who engage the medium in varied, sometimes political ways that move beyond—and often take pleasure in subverting—watercolor's traditional ties to subjects like flowers and 'plein air' landscapes.

Brooklyn artist **Firelei Báez**, for example, focuses on representations of race and gender in her work, looking at the politics surrounding the female body, hair, and clothing among women of the African Diaspora, in particular. Her life-size portrait, *Demetrea* (2010-11) depicts a woman of Jamaican and Haitian descent in an elaborate headdress made of vulture feathers, striking a self-assured, regal pose. Part of a larger series called *Geographic Delay*, the series celebrates the women of diverse ages, body types, and heritages who process in Brooklyn's annual West Indian Parade to celebrate Carnival.

Works in the show encompass a broad range of other interests and approaches to watercolor. **Kelly Inouye** depicts iconic characters from the television sitcoms she grew up with during the 1970s and 1980s. In *On Patrol* (2012), she loosely conjures Ponch and Jon from *CHiPs*, harnessing the nostalgic potential of the medium, while underscoring how few details are necessary to create a recognizable portrait of a famous person. **Russell Crotty** and **Mark Fox** transform watercolor into a sculptural medium. **Nicole Phungrasamee Fein, Sam Messenger, Laurie Reid,** and **Nick Terry** present rigorous abstractions steeped in the history of minimalism. Together with works by other artists in the show, *Contemporary Watercolor* demonstrates the fresh and wide-ranging ways artists are animating this overlooked medium in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

*Contemporary Watercolor* is curated by Veronica Roberts, a New York-based curator. Her recent exhibitions include *Eva Hesse and Sol LeWitt* at the Craig F. Starr Gallery, New York (2011) and *Lee Bontecou: All Freedom in Every Sense* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2010).

*Special thanks to the following galleries who generously lent work to this exhibition: ACME./Los Angeles, Ambach and Rice/Los Angeles, Anthony Meier Fine Arts/San Francisco, CRG/New York, Davidson Contemporary/New York, Eli Ridgway Gallery/San Francisco, Gallery Joe/Philadelphia, Halsey McKay Gallery/East Hampton, James Harris Gallery/Seattle, Kathleen Cullen Fine Arts/New York, Larissa Goldston Gallery/New York, Mulherin + Pollard/New York, Postmasters Gallery/New York, and Stephen Wirtz Gallery/San Francisco.*

For more information, please visit [morganlehmgallery.com](http://morganlehmgallery.com), or contact the gallery at 212.268.6699.