

Lauren Satlowski

Watch the Bouncing Ball

December 12, 2020 – February 13, 2021

Bel Ami is pleased to present Lauren Satlowski's first solo exhibition with the gallery, *Watch the Bouncing Ball*. In a new suite of paintings that vitrify reality and illusion, beguiling subjects tethered to their materiality hover on the edge of transformation. Satlowski seductively articulates textures—clear plastic, pale pink tulip petals, glittery stickers—that double as skins, exposing the vulnerability and resilience of impermanent bodies. Contending with the boundaries that demarcate the context from the individual, her paintings explore the limits and potential of representation.

Rendering sculptural arrangements of souvenirs and junk drawer trinkets, Satlowski makes use of how oil on linen can create a convincing illusion while simultaneously revealing itself as a thin construction. For example, *Me Worry* (2020) is composed of a glass picture frame, an iron-on patch, and a few scattered kidney beans. This meditation on sustenance and frivolity references the historical still-life and its commitment to both the material and ineffable. The glass frame inside a frame draws attention to the picture plane as both window and wall. Invoking self-aware cinematic techniques, the sculpture casts a shadow on a curved backdrop, theatrically and apocalyptically projecting an eclipse onto a dirty white sky. The bromide "Me Worry" on the patch alludes to *Mad Magazine's* postmodern conditioning of middle class American adolescents, and more generally how the body processes richness and scarcity.

In several figurative works Satlowski reaches deeper into the realm of the surreal and the psychological, revisiting objects of affection with cold clarity. *Strings and Horns* (2020) provides a fleeting vision of two porcelain dolls as they ascend into a white light that is frighteningly devoid of context. The scene is imbued with traces of memory and psychological projections; still, it does not look back. At times Satlowski's tone is elegiac as she pays homage to memories she can no longer cling to nostalgically, picturing them now in a more complex, adulterated light. *Bad Santa* (2020), an eerie depiction of a holographic Santa Claus sticker, manifests the shadow self, diffracting eagerness and dread. Throughout the exhibition, faceless figures suggest the temporal nature of all things as soon as one attempts to contain or embody them.

Dueling perspectives on forward and backward motion appear in each of Satlowski's paintings. In *Desert Landscape* (2020), a bionic female ball player is seen in fragments, partially buried in a sandy desert (like Han Solo frozen in carbonite) fading into a thick, polluted atmosphere. Emerging from this inhibiting substance, reaching out to make an energetic play, flesh falls away and machine limbs stall. The skeletal structure, the engineering underneath the vinyl, is exposed. In the 1980 essay *Throwing Like a Girl*, Iris Marion Young investigates how social norms governing female bodily comportment yield an inhibited intentionality; in the act of tossing a ball a little girl is held back by forces inside and outside of herself. Young calls this lived contradiction "ambiguous transcendence." Satlowski's painting of a dynamic yet broken figure assembled from organic and synthetic materials refreshes this concept, entangling nature and culture. This work provokes a tug-of-war between imprisonment and escape, quest and mortality, what was and what might be.

Lauren Satlowski's paintings offer a simultaneous sense of in and out-of-body experience. Her precise study of the play of light on the surface of an object, and how light transfigures, offers a parallax view that instills an unexpected lucidity, and maybe even a liberation of the body. This gesture is particularly compelling at a time when we are bound by restrictive conditions that change every day. Any attempt at comprehending the contemporary is like watching a bouncing ball: unstable yet boringly predictable. On Satlowski's canvases, the game begins when the referee throws the jump ball. She constructs spatialities for beings that can never really be contained, transcending gravity.

Lauren Satlowski (b. 1984, Detroit, MI) lives and works in Los Angeles. She received an MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art (2013) and a BFA from Wayne State University (2009). Her work has been presented in group exhibitions in Los Angeles, New York, Mexico, and Europe. Satlowski has held solo exhibitions with DM Office, Paris, ODD ARK and Embassy in Los Angeles, and Wasserman Projects in Detroit. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and X Museum, Beijing.



Lauren Satlowski
“Watch the Bouncing Ball” at Bel Ami, Los Angeles, 2020



Lauren Satlowski
Bad Santa, 2020
Oil on linen
40 x 30 in (101.6 x 76.2 cm)



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Bad Santa, 2020
Oil on linen
40 x 30 in (101.6 x 76.2 cm)



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Lauren Satlowksi
Strings and Horns, 2020
Oil on linen
40 x 26 in (101.6 x 66 cm)



Lauren Satlowski
"Watch the Bouncing Ball" at Bel Ami, Los Angeles, 2020



Lauren Satlowski
Eggs with Jacaranda Shadow, 2020
Oil on linen
40 x 26 in (101.6 x 66 cm)



Lauren Satlowski
Me Worry, 2020
Oil on linen
18 x 24 in (45.7 x 61 cm)



Lauren Satlowski
Help, 2020
Oil on linen
20 x 16 in (50.8 x 40.6 cm)



Lauren Satlowksi
“Watch the Bouncing Ball” at Bel Ami, Los Angeles, 2020



Lauren Satlow
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Lauren Satlowksi
Strings and Horns study, 2020
Oil on linen
14 x 11 in (35.6 x 27.9 cm)



Lauren Satlowski
Bad Santa study, 2020
Oil on linen
14 x 11 in (35.6 x 27.9 cm)



Lauren Satlowksi
“Watch the Bouncing Ball” at Bel Ami, Los Angeles, 2020



Lauren Satlowski
Lily Vase with Faces, 2020
Oil on linen
27 x 22 in (68.6 x 55.9 cm)



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Lauren Satlowski
Desert Landscape, 2020
Oil on linen
48 x 36 in (121.9 x 91.4 cm)



Lauren Satlowski
Gauntlet, 2020
Oil on linen
16 x 20 in (40.6 x 50.8 cm)



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Lauren Satlowski

b. 1984 Detroit, MI

Lives and works in Los Angeles, CA

EDUCATION

2013 MFA, Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, MI

2009 BFA, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

2006 Study Abroad, Studio Art Centers International, Florence, Italy

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2019 *74 Rue Mazarine*, presented by DM Office, Paris, France

2018 *Gadzinias Bell*, Odd Ark, Los Angeles

2017 *Night in the Diamond Cut*, Embassy, Los Angeles

2014 *Trance*, Wasserman Projects, Detroit

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2019 *Undertones: Biomorphic Art in Los Angeles*, organized by Lindsay Preston Zappas, Cal Poly Art Gallery, San Luis Obispo, CA

A Cloth Over A Birdcage, Chateau Shatto, Los Angeles

2018 *10 Years/100 Sculptures*, organized by Todd Von Ammon and Ian Henrikson, Mexico City, Mexico

2017 *Fuck the Patriarchy*, organized by Ceci Moss, Gas Gallery, Los Angeles

Wormwood, organized by Todd Von Ammon, Ellis King Gallery, Dublin, Ireland

Hobson Jobson, organized by Adam Beris, BBQLA, Los Angeles

Caviar, Central Park Gallery, Los Angeles

2016 *Super Sketchy*, Alleyoop Projects, New York

Together/Alone, Embassy, Los Angeles

Drawn Together, Actual Size, Los Angeles

AWARDS AND GRANTS

2012 Cranbrook Merit Scholarship

2011 Cranbrook Merit Scholarship

2008 Richard Bilaitis Endowed Scholarship in Art, Wayne State University

S. Marciniak Annual Scholarship in Art, Wayne State University

John & Irene Sowinski Endowment, Wayne State University

Wayne State University Art Activity Award

2007 John & Irene Sowinski Endowment, Wayne State University

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS

2019 Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles

2016 Los Angeles Contemporary Archives, Los Angeles