

Melanie Flood
projects

Rainen Knecht

"Total Catastrophe Living"

November 19-December 17, 2022

Melanie Flood Projects presents Rainen Knecht: *Total Catastrophe Living*

Portland, Oregon – Melanie Flood Projects presents *Total Catastrophe Living*, a show of all new large-scale paintings by Rainen Knecht opening November 19 and running through December 17, 2022. These new paintings reflect Knecht's experience as a new mother in a rapidly dying, deeply destructive, and yet incredibly beautiful world. This mixture of dread and delight is reflected in the show's title, which is a play on the title of a mindfulness epic called "Full Catastrophe Living" as well as Martha Stewart's namesake "Living". Not exactly a guide for better living, these paintings tap into the dark humor that provides a crutch to Knecht in her search for parenting prowess as well as the pathos that the inevitable, often constant "failures" inspire. The figures depicted here hover between self portrait and abstracted, stylized forms. Knecht has said that they invoke her interest in epic figures such as giantesses and ogresses in numerous folk traditions as well as including pop cultural references such as Lowly Worm (of Richard Scarry book fame) or Fox Motocross gear in the details. Animals proliferate, sometimes seeming to almost literally breed within the painting, as the mice in Knecht's *Cherry Hell-Rides her Chariot, 2022* appear to. The works begin, however, with the personal, often based on specific stories from the artist's life or the world she inhabits. Intimate moments between mother and child, or in one case, motorcycles are transformed, in her inimitable style, often infusing the intimate with an energetic ferocity.

In form and multi-paneled structure, the paintings here reference early Renaissance frescoes of Piero della Francesca and Filippo Lippi as well as multi-paneled Northern Renaissance altar pieces. The figures are in conversation with everyone from Fragonard to Art Spiegelman, existing between rendered beauty and Garbage Pail Kid putrescence. Figures have skin flapping behind them, in seemingly painless ribbons, as in "Cherry Hell-Rides her Chariot, or they leak milk, simultaneously scratched and squeezed. These choices are decidedly body-horror and Knecht's interest in fairy tales is bolstered by a deep interest in horror. Situated in a recent art historical context in conversation with works by Joan Brown, Elizabeth Murray or Dana Schutz, as well as poets and writers including Alice Notely, Diane di Prima and Rivka Galchen.

"I want to stimulate, to fluctuate, to put something together that feels like the truth as I know it," says Knecht. "I want to filter my interest in art history, pop culture, and basically trash, into something more nuanced than pastiche, more funny than self serious, more weird than elegant."

Accompanying the exhibition is commissioned poetry by Morgan Ritter.

Rainen Knecht (b. 1982) holds a BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute. Her exhibition history includes solo and two-person exhibitions at Fourteen30 Contemporary, Portland, Oregon; SITUATIONS, New York, New York; and CAPITAL, San Francisco, California, as well as recent group exhibitions at Shulamit Nazarian and Various Small Fires in Los Angeles, California; Fisher Parrish, Brooklyn, New York and Stems Gallery, Brussels, Belgium. In 2021 she was awarded the Hallie Ford Fellowship. She is based in Portland, Oregon.

Melanie Flood Projects, founded as a curatorial project by artist Melanie Flood in Brooklyn, NY in 2008, is currently located in downtown Portland, Oregon.



Rainen Knecht
Flower Fresh at Springs Edge, 2022
Oil on linen, artist frame
103 1/2h x 54w x 1d in
RK_0004





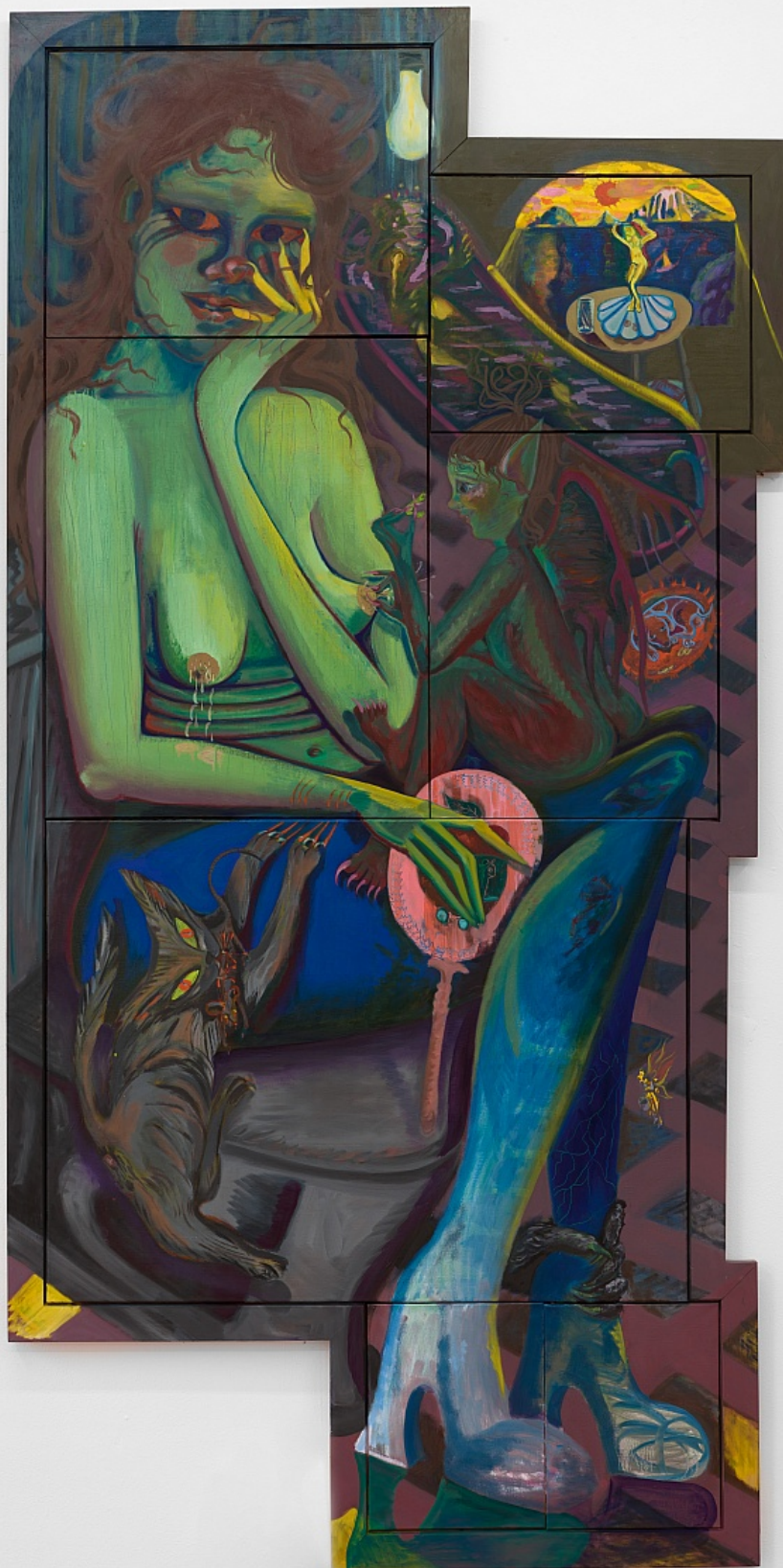
Rainen Knecht
Cherry Hell-Rides her Chariot, 2022
Oil on canvas and linen, artist frame
82h x 95w x 1d in
RK_0002





Rainen Knecht
La Gimblette's Pets, 2022
Oil on canvas, artist frame
40 1/4h x 59w x 1d in
RK_0001





Rainen Knecht
Bath Time at World's End, 2022
Oil and acrylic on linen, artist frame
97 1/4h x 49w x 1d in
RK_0003





Rainen Knecht
Chicken Skin Sphinx (Self Portrait with Mom), 2019
Oil on canvas, artist frame
44 3/4h x 35w x 1d in
RK_0005



EDUCATION

2006 BFA, *San Francisco Art Institute*, San Francisco, CA

AWARDS

2021 Hallie Ford Fellowship in the Visual Arts
2017 Opportunity Grant, Oregon Arts Commission
2006 Painting Honors, San Francisco Art Institute
2005 Madjrakoff Painting Award, San Francisco Art Institute

SOLO & TWO-PERSON EXHIBITIONS

2022 *Total Catastrophe Living*, Melanie Flood Projects, Portland, OR
2021 *R U My Mother*, Fourteen30 Contemporary, Portland, OR
2018 *Daydream of Darkness* with Nicola L, SITUATIONS, New York, NY
2017 *Attitude Problem*, CAPITAL, San Francisco, CA
2017 *Earth Alien*, Fourteen30 Contemporary, Portland, OR
2015 *Crazy Arms*, CAPITAL, San Francisco, CA
2012 *Paintings*, Oakland Dry Goods, Oakland, CA
2010 *Other Ramblers*, Lake Gallery, San Francisco, CA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2022 *Choose your Fighter*, Marvin Gardens, Ridgewood, NY
Garden, Ladies Room, Los Angeles, CA
Bananas, Helen's Costume, Portland, OR
The Views, Moskowitz Bayse, Los Angeles, CA
2021 *Run with Wolves*, The Pit, Los Angeles, CA
Pale Blue Dot, Left Field, Los Osos, CA
Bumpy Road, Helens Costume, Portland, OR
Burnt Offerings, Vulcan Materials Gallery, ASFA, Birmingham, AL
2020 *Home*, Drawer, New York, NY
The Essential Goods Show, Zoe Fisher Projects, New York, NY
Turn back! Turn back!, Shulamit Nazarian, Los Angeles, CA
Psithurism, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR
2019 *A Good Way to Invent the Future*, Ditch Projects, Springfield, OR
Downward Flower, Fourteen30 Contemporary, Portland, OR
2018 *Chimera*, Fisher Parrish, Brooklyn, NY
2017 *NADA Miami Beach* with Capital, San Francisco, CA
Hecate, Various Small Fires, Los Angeles, CA
Geranium, curated by Adrienne Rubenstein, Stems Gallery, Brussels, BE
Metal Heart, Lowell, Portland, OR
2016 *NADA Miami Beach* with CAPITAL, Miami Beach, FL
PMOMA Houseguest Courthouse Square, Portland, OR
Milk of the Poppy, CAPITAL, San Francisco, CA
Faces & Vases, Royal Nonesuch Gallery, Oakland, CA
2013 *SF Art Fair*, Queens Nails Annex, San Francisco, CA
NADA Miami Beach with Queens Nails Annex, Miami Beach, FL
2012 *The Bold Italic*, Los Angeles, CA; Portland, OR; Seattle, WA
Staff Exhibition, SFMOMA, San Francisco, CA
2010 *Today*, MCCLA, San Francisco, CA
Paper Awesome, curated by Brion Nuda Rosch, Baer Ridgway Exhibitions, San Francisco, CA
2008 *The Optimistic*, Rainen Knecht & Christopher Baird, Adobe Books, San Francisco, CA

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2020 Interview with Lindsay Costello, Art and About PDX
2020 Artmaze, Winter Issue #16
2018 Review; Rainen Knecht's Painted Ladies Have a Devilishly Fun 'Attitude Problem', kqed.org