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HARRY SMITH'S SHIRT

Amy Blakemore, blvxnth, Jen Fisher, Matt Kenny, Randi Long, Alice Mackler, Mary Manning, Nikholis Planck, Kerry Schuss, Amy Sillman, and Doug Welsh

APRIL 2 – JUNE 4, 2023

F is pleased to present the group exhibition *HARRY SMITH'S SHIRT*, with artworks by Amy Blakemore, blvxnth, Jen Fisher, Matt Kenny, Randi Long, Alice Mackler, Mary Manning, Nikholis Planck, Kerry Schuss, Amy Sillman, and Doug Welsh. Conceived as an immersive installation of painting, photography and sculpture, this exhibition conjures Harry Smith's spirit in the recognition of the iconoclastic 20th century American artist on the centennial of his birth. *HARRY SMITH'S SHIRT* is on view, by appointment, from April 2 through June 4, 2023, at 4225 Gibson Street, Houston TX, 77007. An opening reception will be held on April 2, from 2–5 pm, with a performance by Randi Long at 4 pm.

At its end (or beginning), this show is not so much *about* Harry Smith (1923–1991) but a party held in his honor. Even as Smith's interests in the occult led him outside himself, reaching beyond the realm of his body into the spirit world (aided by infamous drunkenness and drug use), his work is marked by its nearly “no-tech” attitude, insistently handmade, as a haptic extension of his living body. Throughout his meticulous geometric paintings, the string figures and paper airplanes, his book and record collecting, and his film animations built with single painted cells one frame at a time, his hand was always present, yet transformed by the means of the medium. *HARRY SMITH'S SHIRT* is organized around this sense of touch and the themes that were central to Smith's many projects, namely: modes of abstraction, a quasi-mysticism drenched in anthropology, obsessive collecting, and earthbound psychedelics. The aggressive, fully committed manner in which Smith lived provides a blueprint for the life of an artist, a “roomy garment” to wear.

Two paintings on paper by **Amy Sillman** are indicative of the relentless experimentation of her larger project. The base layer of these works is a screenprinted dot matrix, with which she has interacted or nearly obliterated with brush marks that leap nimbly from observation to channeling influence and back. **Doug Welsh's** intimate abstractions are painted in response to pop songs he listens to on repeat, developing systems of intuitive mark making. In a similar filtering of information, a selection of **Alice Mackler's** paintings on fashion-magazine-pages-mounted-on-canvas shows her persistent engagement with women in advertising's display. **Matt Kenny** returns to the “Tubes” he has made previously on cut aluminum shapes, updated by painting the motif into a rectangular field, a simple shift that transforms the trompe l'oeil objects into perspectival color compositions. **Mary Manning's** photo-collages utilize a simple gridded geometry, creating an elegant visual poetry made up of combinations of discrete photographs; in *High Hopes Redux* (2023) there is a grocer's tray of pears, plastic containers at a sidewalk display, and a table set before a meal. **blvxnth's** black and white *Man and Woman Uptown* (2023) is a simultaneously straightforward and deceptively complex multiple portrait, while the rich dye sublimation print of **Kerry Schuss's** *Blue, Blue, Electric Blue (Electrogram)* (1978/2023) both reveals and belies its process, an exposure made by touching his fingertips to the negative while running an electric charge through his body. **Amy Blakemore** has set aside photography for the moment; included is a selection from her extensive collection of folk arts and crafts and mass-produced objects. **Randi Long's** *39 Red Cans* (2023) sits brazenly on the floor, empty beverage can clusters thickly coated with a red latex membrane. In contrast, **Jen Fisher's** small assemblage *a ritual to find your way home* (2023) is homage and shrine, a quiet poem-object made from an antique picture frame lying on its back covered with, among other items, rose petals, a small stack of rocks and an unlit candle. Hung near the ceiling in a neat row along one wall, **Nikholis Planck's** fourteen hand-painted wooden *Ovoids* (2019–2023) pulse and punctuate the exhibition.

In conjunction with the exhibition, F will present *Airing Out Harry Smith's Shirt*, an eclectic program of film and video organized and presented by New York-based filmmaker and curator Andrew Lampert. The program features a screening of Smith's masterpiece *Early Abstractions* (1964) alongside a selection of works by his contemporaries and descendents, such as Peggy Ahwesh, Robert Frank, M. Henry Jones, Leslie Supnet, and more. *Airing Out Harry Smith's Shirt* is co-presented by and held at Aurora Picture Show, 2442 Bartlett Street, Houston TX, 77098, on April 27, 2023, at 7:30 pm.

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Work in exhibition, clockwise from entrance:

blvxnth *Man and Woman Uptown*, 2023

Archival pigment print, 14 1/8 x 11 1/8 inches (framed)
Edition of 3 + 2 AP

Kerry Schuss *Blue, Blue, Electric Blue (Electrogram)*, 1978/2023

Dye sublimation print on aluminum from 4x5 transparency from 1978, artist's frame, 20 1/4 x 16 3/4 x 1 1/2 inches
Edition of 3 + 1 AP

Nikholis Planck *Large Ovoid*, 2021

Water soluble oil, wax pencil on wax on wood, 4 3/4 x 2 3/4 x 2 3/4 inches

Amy Sillman *SK95*, 2018

Silkscreen, acrylic, ink, on paper, 40 x 26 inches

Amy Sillman *SK100*, 2018

Silkscreen, acrylic, ink, on paper, 40 x 26 inches

Jen Fisher *a ritual to find your way home*, 2023

Antique painted tin frame with velvet backing, poem, plastic, book clipping, rose petals, rocks, beeswax candle, chamomile (on borrowed end table), 2 3/4 x 11 x 15 inches

Mary Manning *High Hopes Redux*, 2023

Chromogenic prints, mat board, artist's frame, 27 1/4 x 23 x 1 1/2 inches

Doug Welsh *Willow*, 2023

House paint, spray paint, glitter, torn paper and charcoal on canvas, artist's frame, 8 5/8 x 10 3/4 inches

Amy Blakemore *Favorite Shit*, 1985–2022

Objects from artist's personal collection, artist's Uncle Clyde's shelf, installation dimensions variable

Matt Kenny *Blue Tubes, pair*, 2023

Oil on panel, 29 3/4 x 23 3/4 inches

Alice Mackler *Untitled paintings*, 2017–2020

Acrylic and collage on canvas, dimensions from left to right: 8 x 8 inches (2020); diptych of two at 8 x 8 inches (2019); 12 x 9 inches (2019); 9 x 12 inches (2019); 10 x 8 inches (2017)

Randi Long *39 Red Cans*, 2023

Latex membrane, aluminum beverage cans, 23 1/2 x 17 x 15 inches

Above: **Nikholis Planck** *Fourteen Ovoids*, 2019–2023

Water soluble oil, wax pencil on wax on wood, each 2 1/2 x 1 5/8 x 1 5/8 inches

For more information, please contact Adam Marnie at office@fmagazine.info