

**Alexandra Metcalf**

*Vol. 18*

15 Orient

March 16 - April 23

Opening reception;

Thursday, March 16th, 6 - 9pm

15 Orient is delighted to present "Vol.18", a solo-exhibition by New York based artist Alexandra Metcalf. The show is Metcalf's first with the gallery and her first solo-presentation in New York.

Alex Metcalf reflects and refracts our physical and emotional existence through a cosmos of personal mythologies reading out towards the universal. Pulsating back and forth between viewer and creator, there's a surreality grounded in real world sensitivity. The inference of human touch breeds an honesty of life inclusive of joy and trauma and labor and exhaustion and sadness and just, well, being. These aspects, of the existentially aware, are arranged so that this static work is seen on the outside yet felt on the inside.

Riotous feminism of the past is deployed as style and posturing, like all history and collective memory, but one where the teeth still lay sharpened. Metcalf's unworldly creations are self-sufficient within an ecosystem as each emotion of life builds up an environment of anthropomorphisms. Yet, this isn't world building, rather an echoing of the fundamentals of our inherited one. All of its facts and constructs mirrored, yet warped. The pains of growing up, growing old, of losing those around us, as well as cruelty or the pleasures of illusion and humor, the enjoyment of the ornamental.

The inclusion of the found muddies the line between her art and our lives. Cycles of growth rotate everywhere. Objects learning to stand on their own, the reused as open narrative and each a form of reincarnation in itself. Sculptural rhythms become magic acts, contagiously awed at the alchemy of how objects exist as all. What sets Metcalf and these works apart from so much is a generosity of experience, granted through form and inflection, harnessing rather than relying on her own feelings for a personal universal that is, if not egoless, than ego less.

The practice as a whole works beyond and softly against the personal mythologies of Matthew Barney, the uncanny mimicry of Robert Gober and the appropriative working class excess of Mike Kelley. That these gentle big boys might be both acknowledged and reappraised through a grotesque of attractive girlhood conveys the provocative paradoxes Metcalf is messing with. The psychedelic and psychotic enacted is a beautiful chaos focused on fragility and balance literally manufactured through strength. Like our own world, the one alluded to here is operatic and Metcalf, as creator and conductor, composes symphonies of the daily and profound. Protection here is unstable and lucid as the tumult of feeling resides in these created carriers. Wonder is an emotion of curiosity and exploration and here it verges on chaos. It's at the heart of that chaos where the nucleus of the big themes, the ones powering our ecstasy and grief, reside.

- Mitchell Anderson

**Alexandra Metcalf (b. 1992) is a London-born, New York based artist. Her hand-crafted works address the social and personal history of femininity in conjunction with themes of fantasy, identification, domesticity, anxiety and loss. Drawing on a personal archive of specific traditions of craft and ornamentation (Brit-Punk, The Arts and Crafts Movement, and Victorian England), Metcalf elaborately allegorizes and reimagines the mother-daughter dyad. Her works have previously been exhibited at Fitzpatrick Gallery (FR), LOMEX (NYC), Downs and Ross (NYC), and Ginny on Frederick (UK).**

For more information or for visuals, please contact the gallery:

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