

EMANATE

JULIA GARCIA, JEN HITCHINGS, MANAL KARA + CALLI MOORE

May 18 - July 7, 2023

Gaa Gallery New York

Gaa Gallery is pleased to present *Emanate*, featuring Julia Garcia, Jen Hitchings, Manal Kara, and Calli Moore. Opening on May 18, the exhibition will be on view at the gallery's New York location through June 24.

Emitting light, sensation, and vibrational tactility, the divergent practices of Julia Garcia, Jen Hitching, Manal Kara, and Calli Moore send out signals—their work projects into the future. Forward-facing, together, these artists engage in a conversation on the malleability of memory, nostalgia, fantasy, and fragments of an imagined future. Individually, their practices highlight contemporary notions of ecology, the living world, spirituality, and the friction between ideas of the past and how they inform lived experience.

For Julia Garcia, these points of tension lay between the idea of place and lived experience. Raised in South Florida, Garcia's work examines the complexity of Floridian mythos. Referencing spaces where the wilderness meets urban development and spring breakers meet rising sea levels, Garcia depicts images of bikini-clad women, alligators, and landscapes comprised of lush renderings of the Everglades. In pin-up-like poses, the women in Garcia's paintings look back. Using water-based media on canvas, Garcia sources images of big-game trophy hunts from a range of niche websites dedicated to scantily clad female hunters, which supposes viewers who seek the objectification of both the act and the performer. With one foot in ecological preservation and the other in exploitation in the name of spectacle, with these works, Garcia asks complex questions about desire, empowerment, and the complexities of human relationships with the environment. In this matrix of human desire, relations of power, and ecological precarity, what are the terms of engagement?

Central to the work of Manal Kara is a nuanced and interconnected understanding of the living world. A poet, and self-trained artist, Kara draws influence from the forest surrounding their studio. Critical of a hierarchal and anthropocentric view of the world, Kara's work depicts the pithy and intertwined relationships of living beings and all their contradictions and complexities. Using images and sculptural materials, such as wire, chains, hair, found objects, glazed ceramic, and printed fabric, Kara creates a hybrid of sculptural and photographic forms. Producing window-like portals, images, and objects are suspended and tethered. With weight and tension, Kara's diaristic works engage a dialog of life cycles. Through the poetics of photography and sculpture Kara insists on close proximity to all aspects of the living world- death, birth, adaptation, decay, and regeneration. In living with these life processes, Kara presents us with fragments, tableaus of flourishing future past.

In a similarly fragmented toggling between time, Jen Hitchings' psycho-sexual and surrealist paintings offer vistas of familiar and archetypal landscapes that consider the enormity of nature and its tenuous relationship with humanity. Referencing photos of places she's visited in the Northeast and the deserts of the Southwest US, Hitchings creates monochromatic paintings that translate time and place while alluding to suggestive figurative forms. In her work, the body emerges within the landscape, and subtle patterns evolve alongside geological formations. In a

singular view, shade, hue, temperature, and atmospheric conditions are rendered in smooth brush strokes and contrasted by areas of thin, translucent paint and illustrative hard-edged renderings of flora. Outside of the frame, the rest of time swirls around the light of passing seasons and times of day. Either before humans evolved into being or after a fallen civilization, Hitchings paints the expanse of time, landscape, and sky. Looking outward, how far can we see into the landscape? How far can we look past—or how deeply into—ourselves?

Calli Moore answers this question with closeness and care. Moore's ethereal abstract paintings of floral light bodies are inspired by the intersections of art, science, and spirituality. Through painting, Moore delves into the realm of plants and gleans what nature offers us as a guide. Through the magnification of flowers and subtle suggestion of space, Moore's paintings provide an expansive and poetic ode to nature. Using a restrained but vibrant palette, each painting pairs floral motifs with radiant light beams. Emanating from an unknown source, sometimes seemingly from the image itself, sometimes elsewhere, Moore's paintings move with a subtle but unrelenting radiance. Inspired by her experience of growing up in rural Iowa, Moore's paintings remind us of the nature that is everywhere and inseparable from our lives as humans.

Cuban American artist **Julia Garcia** (b. 1992, Born in Pompano Beach, FL, USA) uses a collage-like application of acrylic and ink onto wet raw canvas to reflect on the physical geography of growing up close to the Everglades, where the natural flow of the wetlands has been slowly corralled and shaped by urban development. Formative years spent in South Florida, notorious for its spring break culture and outrageous headlines, have shaped her interest in imagery that questions violence, erotic drive, and the seduction of spectacle. Garcia received her BFA from the School of Visual Art in 2014 and her MFA in 2016 from the Hoffberger School of Painting at Maryland Institute College of Art. Solo exhibitions include *Sawgrass*, Night Club Gallery, St. Paul, MN, *Information Lines*, Permanent Installation, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Thuwal, Saudi Arabia; *Blue Raspberry*, Lazarus Center, Baltimore, MD, and a forthcoming exhibition at Galerie Fran Reus, Palmade Mallorca, Spain.

Jen Hitchings (b.1988, New Jersey, USA) is a Burbank-based artist whose work depicts surreal, natural environs in monochromatic color and graphic quality. Through painting her work investigates the tenuous relationship between humankind and nature, and in recent years, she has embarked on a self-reflective investigation of the psyche, relationships, erotic desire, and cosmic forces. Hitchings holds a BFA in Painting & Drawing from SUNY Purchase College, a Certificate of Completion of Sotheby's online certificate Art as a Global Business, and a certificate in Small Business & Entrepreneurship from CUNY Hunter College. She has had solo shows at Taymour Grahne Projects (London, UK and online); One River School, Englewood, NJ; MEN Gallery, New York, NY; PROTO Hoboken, NJ; and Ideal Glass, New York, NY, among others. Recent group exhibitions have taken place at Anat Ebgi, Los Angeles, CA; Tiger Strikes Asteroid, LA; Ana Mas Projects, Barcelona, Spain; Geoffrey Young Gallery, Great Barrington, MA; Wassaic Project, Wassaic, NY; Newark International Liberty Airport, Newark, NJ; and Cindy Rucker, Pierogi, and Ideal Glass in New York, NY. She was a recipient of the Queens Council on the Arts' New Works Grant in 2018. Between 2013–2020, Hitchings co-directed Transmitter and Associated Gallery in Brooklyn, NY, she is the founder of Studio Associate, an artist-focused consulting agency, and director of Career Services at California Institute of the Arts.

Manal Kara (b. 1986 Pennsylvania, USA) is a Moroccan-American self-taught artist working across sculpture, photography, installation, video, and text. Recent solo exhibitions include *Hypothèses*, Pangée, Montréal, Canada; *Conjectures*, Shulamit Nazarian, Los Angeles, CA; *Xylem & Phlöem*, No Place, Columbus, OH; *The Viewing-Room vs. The Adoring-Gaze*, Interstate Projects, Brooklyn, NY; and *Song of the Other Worm*, Prairie, Chicago, IL. They have attended residencies at Shandaken: Storm King, ACRE, Ox-Bow, September Spring at the Kesey Farm, and Project Freewill, and they look forward to a residency with 8th House this summer. Upcoming solo exhibitions include Deli Gallery, NYC; Murmurs, Los Angeles; M. LeBlanc, Chicago; and Hair+Nails, Minneapolis.

Calli Moore (B. 1991, Iowa, United States) is an American painter currently residing in Brooklyn, NY. Moore was born and raised in Iowa. Moore received her BFA from the University of Iowa in 2014 and her MFA from American University, Washington, D.C., in 2016. Moore has exhibited work with notable galleries such as Library Street Collective, Deanna Evans Projects, Harper's, and Deli Grocery. Moore's work is deeply influenced by the spiritual and metaphysical and where that intersects with the natural world, giving it an aura of the divine.