

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

For Immediate Release

LEILA HELLER GALLERY TO EXHIBIT AT ART SOUTHAMPTON THURSDAY, JULY 26 – SUNDAY, JULY 30, 2012 BOOTH A39



Ran Hwang, *Healing Blossoms*, 2012, Paper buttons, beads, and pins on wood panel (7 panels),
66 x 325 in (170 x 826 cm)

Southampton – Leila Heller Gallery will show new and recent work by several contemporary artists at the new fair Art Southampton from Thursday, July 26 through Monday, July 30 on the grounds of the Southampton Elks Lodge, booth A39. The gallery will present an exhibition of work by artists Rachel Lee Hovnanian, Ran Hwang, Iké Udé, and the collaborative team Kate Eric, including mixed media installations, photographs, and paintings. Also available will be works by Kezban Arca Batibeki, Khosrow Hassanzadeh, Kim Chun Hwan, Hadieh Shafie and Firooz Zahedi.

Among the highlights will be Hwang's monumental 27 foot long, 7-panel work, *Healing Blossoms*, 2012. Paper buttons, beads, and sequins, affixed by pins form snowy white and marigold plum blossoms that climb like ivy up and down the vibrant Tiffany blue panels. Hwang's work involves weaving thread, forming handmade paper buttons, and hammering each pin approximately 25 times. The repetitive nature of these tasks requires the utmost concentration and discipline, recalling the meditative practices of Zen masters.

Rachel Lee Hovnanian will exhibit *Reflection #8* from her most recent series, *The Gates of Narcissus*. The 7-foot multi-layered metal painting gleams with lavish metallic leaf and cast metal narcissus flowers on linen. Also, by Hovnanian will be her *Abu Dhabi Lights*, 2011, a light-box that includes narcissus flowers planted into Botox bottles. For over a decade now, Hovnanian has been engaged in exploring and capturing the essence of the narcissus, the fragile flower whose symbolic associations emphasize issues of beauty – its ephemerality, preservation, and inevitable decay. The work is at once witty, sardonic, and biting caustic, but also playful and humorous.

From Kate Eric will be paintings and works on paper. The husband and wife team takes turns painting layer upon layer of bold jewel-toned colors to create fantastical and dynamic large-scale paintings. These works transport the viewer to a surreal universe inspired by natural wonders as diverse as volcanoes, sandstorms, dark galaxies, and the deep sea filled with flourishing algae and coral.

Two portraits by Nigerian photographer and filmmaker Iké Udé will also be on view. Udé takes photographic portraits of highly stylish and fashionable individuals placed against a fanciful and colorful background. The portraits will serve as a preview to his May 2013 exhibition entitled *The Exquisites*.

Presented in the fair's public space, in the entryway to the café, will be another work by Ran Hwang. *Rest II*, 2009, depicts a Buddha resplendently coated with layers of lustrous silver buttons and beads intricately patterned to form the ornate figure. Hwang contrasts the figure's solid form with a spattering of buttons and beads that fall from the edge of the work into the negative space that surrounds it. This notion of the artwork's deterioration is common practice in Hwang's repertoire as she reminds the viewer of the dichotomy of permanence and impermanence, and ultimately the transience of life.

Art Southampton will be held at the Art Southampton Pavilion behind Southampton Elks Lodge (605 County Road 39) and will run from 12 pm-10 pm July 27-28, and from 12 pm-8 pm July 29-30. There will be a VIP Preview July 26, 6 pm-10 pm. Please visit www.art-southampton.com for further information on the fair.

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For more information, please contact Lauren Pollock at Lauren@leilahellergallery.com or call 212-249-7695.

Press Contact:

Nicole Straus Public Relations

Nicole Straus, 631-369-2188, nicole@nicolestrausspr.com

Margery Newman, 212-475-0252, MargeryNewman@aol.com