

**SUMMER GROUP SHOW**  
August — September 2018



OPENING:  
Thursday, August 2, 6-8PM  
568 W 25th Street

New York, New York — Leila Heller Gallery is pleased to present a summer group show featuring installation pieces, photographs, sculptures, mixed media work and paintings by a selection of the Gallery's artists and other contemporary artists: Reza Aramesh, Rachel Lee Hovnanian, Shoja Azari and Shahram Karimi, Ran Hwang, Iké Udé, Jai Young Jeong, Nick Moss, Donald Baechler, Richard Hudson, Philip Taaffe, Enoc Perez, Kenny Scharf, John Chamberlain, and Farideh Lashai.

This year's Summer Group Show features an array of artists from the international Leila Heller Gallery program. Artists throughout the exhibition challenge the notion of "the perspective" — who is the gazer, and what are the distinctions between "seeing" versus "looking"? While not inherently political in nature, the works displayed here feature several artists observing the notion of conflict, whether in ideals, societal outlook, or purely the "conflict" between mediums in art.

Highlights of the show include Reza Aramesh's *Action 105*, a work just featured in the Met Breuer's show *Like Life: Sculpture, Color, and the Body*. From a massive archive of reportage and press photography, Aramesh removes figures from the context of images immortalizing war and violence, calling into question how the canon of Western art portrays suffering.

After a successful three-part show with the gallery, titled *The Women's Trilogy Project* (TWTP), Rachel Lee Hovnanian joins the Summer Group Show with new additions for her

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previous exhibitions. Both *Glance* and *Le Petit* focus on the narcissus flower and themes of beauty and memory. Her set of *Body Armor* sculptures embody the idea of modern femininity, a prominent theme threaded throughout her art career. Also featured are her signature neons, including *Bimbo* and *ILYSFM*, commenting on the age of social media and its influence on society.

From his *Sartorial Anarchy* series, *Sartorial Anarchy #15* by Iké Udé, a Nigerian-born photo-grapher best known for his costumed self-portraits, is represented here. This body of work seeks to comment on systematic dualities existing in the world from fashion and art; the individual and the everyman; African and postnationalist; and mainstream/marginal — a fitting addition to a show encompassing ideas around “the perspective.”

Through the marriage of wholly opposing mediums, Shoja Azari and Shahram Karimi's video painting, titled *Dreamscape II*, depicts pink-and-white foliage on which a video rendering of the work is imposed, providing the piece with an ethereal presence. What does painting supply that video does not, and vice versa? What perspective do we gain when the two mediums are placed on top of each other?

Painter Kenny Scharf uses cultural references and imagery taken from advertisements and cartoons and injects them into mainstream contemporary art. In doing so, he warps classical Americana symbols and imagery in his compositions, creating a surreal picture of a dystopian wasteland.

Eastern imagery, such as Islamic architecture and Pompeiiian mosaics, is a strong influence in the work of Philip Taaffe. His visually exuberant and complex work is based on his own belief that painting should be a synthesis of visual forces and contain a wide range of artistic methods. Through this, Taaffe questions the standards of modernism and its defiance, and instead seeks a visual aesthetic and illusionistic effect.

Amid the noise of the Western world, Ran Hwang provides Eastern images of tranquility, crafting motifs of blossoms, birds, and palaces as comments on the cyclical nature of life, non-visibility, and the beauty of transient moment. Hwang's process is meticulous, placing pins tipped with buttons of various materials. Through this intense display of patience, she forces her viewers into a state of calm almost alien in nature in our contemporary world.

By imposing one of the most important artists in history - Pablo Picasso - onto a contemporary bodice, Enoc Perez, a Puerto-Rican born painter, is shifting the style of Cubism onto the era of social media. In *Untitled (Thrasher)*, the multi-layered, inkjet collage embraces technology while employing ideas of beauty and nostalgia.

Joining the Summer Group Show is Nick Moss, whose work begins with large sheets of raw materials, including mild steel, or sold plate steel. With these, he uses industrial tools such as welders and water jets to cut his “canvas” before imposing his design on the surface. In doing so, by definition, these metal sheets become the images he creates, literally one of the same. Unlike paint applied to canvas, his “emoji method” and “nude method,” as he calls them, cannot be scraped away from the steel.

Born in Yecheon, a small village in Korea, Jai Young Jeong's art focuses on the relationship between his rural upbringing juxtaposed with his move to the urban city of Seoul. His two pieces, both titled *Moment*, exemplify his interest in the architecture and design related

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to art.

Sculptor Richard Hudson, born in Yorkshire, England, creates polished sculptures that connote female power through their over-exaggerated ideals found in the canon of Western art and sculpture. In *Marilyn Monroe*, the free imagination of form and surreal reflective surface creates a warped perspective of the surrounding environment. By doing this, he questions the core of the human condition and psyche.

John Chamberlain is yet another sculptor joining ranks for our Summer Group Show, whose works shift the perspective of the Abstract Expressionist aesthetic into the realized third-dimension. Manipulating metal foils, glass, foam, and rushed automobile parts, he welds immense, functional works of art, such as *The Table of Tides*. The vivid color of the table comes from the artist's unique process of sandblasting the original paint from the surface of the metal to expose the raw underlay before applying a fresh coat.

Lastly, Donald Baechler's *The Rose of Deli. No. 1* provides novel insight into the way through which the Western gaze interprets Eastern imagery, evolving Orientalism to suit the a childlike aesthetic. In doing so, he emphasizes the significance of wielding symbols as tools to navigate foreign notions and concepts.

We look forward to presenting this sample of our expansive program, with the Summer Group Show on view through September.

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