

HAUNTINGS

Barbara Friedman, Jillian McDonald, Marigold Santos

A three-person exhibition

February 22 – March 29, 2020

Opening: Sat, Feb 29, 5:30 – 8pm

The ghost or the reanimated corpse that haunts a scene is thought of as returning to a place where it no longer belongs; it's become an uninvited guest in its most familiar place. This three-person exhibition features paintings by Barbara Friedman, videos and drawings by Jillian McDonald, and mixed media works by Marigold Santos, work that meditate on these phantom drifters - at the end of all their exploring and now unknown at home.

Barbara Friedman makes painterly figurative paintings of unreliable narrators in scenarios that are unsettling both narratively and formally. Dislocation has always been her subject, which she's recently expanded by making images appear to give her protagonists a sense of arriving, as if they entered the pictorial space as revenants. Friedman relies on the representational traditions that provide backdrops to her figures -- the places in which the dislocation occurs -- but is also skeptical of those traditions. Thinking as a skeptic, she toys with the received language of the landscape and portraiture traditions; working as a practitioner she lets the formalist concerns of modernist abstraction guide her, however much she interrogates those concerns.

In **Jillian McDonald's** video, *Freeze* - shot in the Arctic Circle - there is little movement in a landscape haunted by forlorn eco-tourists and wandering northern pop icons. The metaphorical party is over - a lone clown drifts, party balloons list, zeppelins floats, and tropical plants dot the permafrost. In a photo series called *Crystal Lake*, rocks morph into crystals, an orb appear in the trees, water shines, and there is an uncanny mirroring of the natural world. Drawings of drift ice confound negative space as the ice itself is suspended like strange ghosts.

Marigold Santos explores the ways in which ideas of self-hood can become multiple, fragmented, and dislocated and then reinvented and recreated through a reflection of movement, migration and change. The imagery within her interdisciplinary work consists of elements that reflect on the notion of a self that is plural and in-process, and takes place within the realms of the otherworldly. Persistent in her work is the reference to the creature of fear in Filipino folklore known as the **Asuang** - a supernatural shape-shifting witch and ghoulish who has the ability to self-sever. In her narrative, the **Asuang** speak not of malevolence, but of lived experience, self-awareness, transformation, and empowerment to celebrate and embrace plurality and fragmented identities.

For five hundred years exploration has meant new territory, with all the connotations of discovery and excitement but also of conquest and exploitation. The ghost stories in these works sound a different emotional register as they bring their figures back to explore what Ralph Waldo Emerson calls "the near, the low, the common" – or what would be near and low and common to these poor visitors if only they still existed.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

Barbara Friedman is an artist based in New York City and a professor of art at Pace University. She has exhibited widely, with thirty-six solo shows and reviews of Friedman's work have appeared in the New York Times, the New York Sun, The Irish Times, Newsday, Art in America, ARTS Magazine, and Artweek. A group of her paintings were selected for the 2007 issue of New American Paintings, and another group for the 2010 issue.

www.barbarafriedmanpaintings.com

Jillian McDonald is a Canadian artist living in Brooklyn who works primarily in video and performance. She received numerous grants and participated in residencies in Arizona, Svalbard, The Yukon, Scotland, Sweden, California, and Québec; in 2020 she is in residence at LMCC on Governor's Island. She has exhibited widely across North America and Europe, and was reviewed in the New York Times and Canadian Art.

www.jillianmcdonald.net

Marigold Santos is a Canadian artist pursuing an inter-disciplinary art practice involving drawn, painted, and printed works, sculpture, animation, and sound. She completed an MFA from Concordia University, Montreal in 2011. She is a recipient of numerous awards and grants and has exhibited extensively across Canada. She currently divides both residence and practice between Calgary and Montreal.

www.marigoldsantos.com



Barbara Friedman: *Pinocchio Defeats Gumbi*, Oil on canvas, 36" x 30", 2017



Marigold Santos: *Of Wax*, Acrylic on linen, 36" x 72", 2016



Jillian McDonald: *Spiritvideo*, 12:20 min., 2013

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