

Mana Contemporary

Mana BSMT and Apostrophe NYC present: *Little Big Show*



Base 12, *Miniature Series* for the Casual Art Fair, 2016

July 15–September 9, 2017

OPENING RECEPTION
Saturday, July 15, 2017, 5–10PM

Jersey City, NJ—Mana BSMT presents *Little Big Show*, a group exhibition investigating mitigated experience and its effect on viewing art in a post-digital era. The project was conceived and produced by Apostrophe's Base 12, a group of twelve NYC-based emerging and experimental artists working in a quasi-collective. *Little Big Show* critiques assumptions of virtual versus “real” representation by positing two allied narratives in sequential galleries: the first in an exhibition of miniature digital reproductions, the second in a series of original artworks. Encapsulating a world enthralled with virtual interpretation through social media, *Little Big Show* challenges our notions of representation by interrogating the value of the analog, unmediated experience.

The virtual show is a miniature exhibition that offers the physical manifestation of a virtual representation, one that mimics the online 3D gallery tour. The “virtual reality” presented in this tiny digital reproduction of artworks mirrors the type of reduced abstraction with

which we share much of our experiences through social media. Flattened and purely utilitarian—like Instagram or Facebook—the goal is simple comprehension. The diminutive scale accentuates the model digital realm, inviting us to revel in this alternate universe and pretend for a moment that this virtual scene is real. A green screen, where one can take selfies with the work, highlights the potential absurdity of selfie culture in terms of viewing art. Confronted with these digital realities outside of a logical environment, we are challenged to reflect on the allure and contention inherent in digital representation, and what it means to view art in the age of social media.

The analog show presents twelve large-scale paintings by each of the Base 12 artists. Each work shares the same dimensions, while varying widely in terms of material and content. The consistency of size, in contrast to the individual visual and conceptual content of each picture, points the paintings away from physical art object and in the direction of each artist's profile instead. The tension between conformity and individuality intends to reference the online experience, where users create profiles (digital expressions of individuality) while using the same tools to present that individuality. In this way, the analog show, too, functions as a metaphor for the ways in which culture, even when manifested “in real life” guides uniform expressions of the self.

Join the conversation using #LittleBigShow.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Caslon Bevington (b. 1992, New York City) studied at Parsons and the Art Students League and currently lives and works in New York City. Bevington describes her practice as “a desire to communicate something incomplete and unformed.” Through paint, pixel, word, and fabric she creates work that functions as a bridge between the hypothetical and the physical, objects operate as artifacts of personal-as-political discovery formulated within a landscape balancing between nihilism and mysticism.

Ryan Bock (b. 1989, San Francisco) has a BFA from the Art Institute of Chicago. Currently he lives and works in New York City. Bock's work includes painting, drawing, puppetry, animation, and experimental film methods. Preferring a handcrafted aesthetic, and feeling as if

the use of computers diminishes the presence of his artistic hand. The majority of Bock's work is devoid of digital mediums, opting instead for time tested analog methods. At the root of Bock's practice is a need for narrative structure. Resting somewhere between mythology and nightmare Bock depicts *mise en scène* riddled with symbolism and allusions both cinematic and painterly in nature.

Morell Cutler (b. 1991, New York City) has a BFA from California College of Art. He currently lives and works in New York City. Cutler employs a vivid color palette to compose internal-landscapes/symbolic still lifes, exploring the cultural and personal significance of his identity as a black gay man in contemporary America. Cutler references the body symbolically and sensually through weighted psychic-objects often tropical fruit and flora.

Alana Dee Haynes (b. 1992, New York City) is a mixed-media artist who currently works and lives in New York City. She has a BFA from the Fashion Institute of Technology. Haynes's work exists somewhere between rhythm, pulsation, repetition, and meditation. Working with found images or collaborating with numerous photographers, Haynes incorporates her patterned illustrations to create visual narratives of form, closeness, and touch.

Charlie Hudson (b. 1992, Sydney) is an Australian-American painter who currently lives and works in New York City. He has a BA from the University of Vermont. Hudson's work is inspired by the intersection between industry, art, and nature. Drawing from the beautiful simplicity in natural abstraction—like shadows and tree branch silhouettes—Hudson creates intrapersonal worlds of organically pixelated landscapes.

Kolter Hodgson (b. 1992, Burlington) studied sound engineering at SAE Institute and currently lives and works in New York City. Hodgson's work is a product of his restless drive to create. In a surreal amalgam of pop culture and the artist's own imagination, Hodgson's imagery is often exploding or coming apart, as if it unable to control the bonds of its own existence. Within this chaos lies Hodgson's precise and confident line work, holding it all together, adding structure through form and style.

The Love Child (b. 1989, Grenada) is a self-taught painter and former street artist. He currently lives and works in New York City. Originally drawn to illustration as a means of creating companionship, The Love Child continues to deal with imagined characters in his abstracted exploration of the figure. Influenced by the rich organic colors of the Caribbean, his color palate exudes an energy that is barely contained by his rough black outlines. His work attempts to simplify form through feeling and intuition.

Julia M. Powers (b. 1990, Massachusetts) has a BFA from Massachusetts College of Art & Design. She currently lives and works in New York City. Powers works from her heart and her carefully refined observation of the world. The subjects of Powers's work are often

forsaken or disregarded objects that are transformed into adorned protagonists in her realistic paintings. Currently Powers's focus has been a collection of paintings all produced from holographic images—the paintings explore subtle motion and perception.

James Rubio (b. 1982, San Francisco) studied photography at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, but fell in love with painting and street art later in New York City. He currently lives and works in Bushwick, Brooklyn. In 2006, Rubio joined the Antagonist Art Movement and began regularly exhibiting paintings at Niagara Bar. He has participated in international group and solo shows and has painted murals around the world. In 2015 he joined Apostrophe NYC's Base 12 project. Rubio's work combines the immediate energy of street art with a refined layering process, creating a space and texture that mirrors the depth and mystery of a shimmering pool of water.

James Reyes (b. 1991, New York City) has a BFA from SVA. He currently lives and works in New York City. Emerging from textual explosions, Reyes shapes his expressionistic gestures and splatters it into disembodied humans forms, illustrative reminders of life. Highlighting the anamorphic quality of gestural painting becoming representational, Reyes acts as a guide pulling out imagery from the visceral chaos he breeds. His work exists in a balance between action and reaction, expressing and contextualizing.

Bruno Smith (b. 1990, New York City) has a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He currently lives and works in New York City. Smith works with clothing, blankets, and upholsteries either donated, found or from his own past purchases. With the raw material already charged with history and personal attachment, Smith then cuts up and collages the textiles, at once both preserving and destroying their sentimental value. The works are composed like an abstract painting, with large shapes of fabric forming a background and thinner strips traversing on top, mimicking broad brushstrokes. In this post-modern take on painting, Smith inverts the expressionistic gestures of Abstract Expressionism into the calmed and slowed process of sewing.

Sei Smith (b. 1990, New York City) studied painting at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Currently he lives and works in New York City. Visually, Smith draws from the forms and materiality of minimalism. Conceptually, his work pushes towards unfounded experience through the nuances of individual perception—always questioning and reexamining how we view art and how we can view art.

ABOUT MANA BSMT

Mana BSMT is a collaborative hub for artists, with private and semi-private studios, and open-plan workspaces. Occupying the entire lower part of Mana Contemporary's headquarters in New Jersey, half of this 100,000-square-foot space is reserved for the BSMT New Media Program (NMP), BSMT Residencies, and Mana Residencies. The other half is available for rent to artists who seek a community experience.

ABOUT MANA CONTEMPORARY

Founded in 2011, Mana Contemporary is a leading arts destination dedicated to celebrating the creative process. Headquartered in a former tobacco warehouse in Jersey City, Mana unites artists' studios, exhibition spaces, and ancillary services in a single location, facilitating conversation and collaboration among its burgeoning creative community. Together with its sister campuses in Chicago and Miami, Mana serves as a lively center for all members of the art world. Mana Contemporary is home to the Richard Meier Model Museum, Ayn Foundation, the International Center of Photography, The Florence Academy of Art, Gary Lichtenstein Editions, Eileen S. Kaminsky Family Foundation, Armitage Gone! Dance, Keating Foundry, Shen Wei Dance Arts, Mana Urban Arts Project, and many others. For additional information, please visit manacontemporary.com.

ABOUT APOSTROPHE NYC

Apostrophe NYC is an iconoclastic art gallery that works personally with artists to create art experiences and careers freed from tradition. Founded in 2012 by brothers Sei and Ki Smith, Apostrophe NYC began as a renegade art gallery and underground music venue in Bushwick, Brooklyn, hosting pop-up events and art shows that push the boundaries of expected experiences. Currently, Apostrophe NYC and their Base 12 artists have a 9,000-square-foot gallery and studio space through a year-long residency program at Mana BSMT. Since 2016, Apostrophe NYC's main focus has been their Base 12 project, a two-year global art project featuring twelve emerging artists through a series of site specific pop-ups and exhibitions. The goal is to showcase these twelve artists while simultaneously exploring the effect of site and context on the art experience.

PRESS CONTACT

info@manabsmt.com

Mana Contemporary
888 Newark Avenue
Jersey City, NJ 07306

STAY CONNECTED

[@manabsmt](https://www.instagram.com/manabsmt)
[@manacontemporary](https://www.instagram.com/manacontemporary)
[@apostrophenyyc](https://www.instagram.com/apostrophenyyc)