Natalie Frank  
*Workspace Program 2015*

**Artist statement**

In my residency, I fell in love with paper making and pulp painting, specifically. There are freedoms inherent in this media which I had never encountered--there is an unusual ability to make marks and form with intense fluidity. I love the ways in which pulp can be used with various agents to become transparent, and also opaque, and can retain a sense of speed which often feels embedded in the surface of the paper. I enjoyed layering and juxtaposing areas of rendered painting (with elements that I think of when working in oil: skin, hands, faces, eyes) with areas of pure pulp. Using methyl cellulose and formation aid, I was able to play with effects specific to paper, such as marbling, swirling and pure accident. The pulp can retain such bright and pure color, even when being mixed, manipulated and poured. Unlike my past work in oil and gouache and chalk pastel, pulp paint acts in unexpected ways that often felt humorous to me!

I began experimenting with different ways to use the pulp and to paint with it and lay it down. In a series of portraits of women, I tried embedding threads, marbling and using some of the bright form of the paint in combinations with rendered areas that recall the possibilities of oil paint. Soon, I was finding immense pleasure in moving off of the page, usually 20 x 30" and then 30 x 40" as I became more confident. I was thinking of the paper as shaped canvases, using the pellons and tape to demarcate the absolute boundaries of size. Painting women and dogs kissing and dancing in the landscape and in interiors, I came to love the way that the color and the pulp as image itself could support the humor and playfulness and perversity of the imagery.

Working with Amy was a joy! She is an incredible artist and collaborator. She guided me through the possibilities of the medium, anticipating every question, problem, and possibility and knew ways to help me develop the work, before I even understood which questions to ask. It can be daunting to immerse yourself in a new process in a new place, making work in a non-private space--what I felt at Dieu Donné was a love and respect for the medium of paper and its possibilities and an enthusiasm and support of artists that made everything outside of the excitement of a new medium fall away. Anything and everything seemed possible.

I came to Dieu Donné at a time when I had just finished a sustained project of drawings with no expectation that I might fall in love with a medium outside of oil painting or drawing with gouache and chalk pastel. I feel with certainty that working with pulp painting has revealed new ideas and modes of working which I have taken back into the studio. I am also sure that this practice will be a part of mine for the rest of my life.

– Natalie Frank
About the Artist

New York-based painter Natalie Frank was born in Austin, Texas, in 1980. She earned an M.F.A. in visual arts at Columbia University’s School of the Arts in 2006 and holds a B.A. in studio art from Yale University. In 2003–2004, she was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship for study at the National Academy of Fine Art in Oslo, Norway. Most recently, Frank has had a solo exhibition of drawings based on the unsanitized tales of the Brothers Grimm at The Drawing Center, New York (April 10–June 28, 2015) which is on view at The Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas, Austin (July 11–November 15, 2015), accompanied by a book of her drawings illustrating 36 of these tales, “Tales of the Brothers Grimm. Drawings by Natalie Frank” which is the most comprehensive collection of these tales made by a fine artist.

About Dieu Donné

Dieu Donné is a non-profit contemporary artist workspace dedicated to the creation, promotion, and preservation of new art made using hand papermaking techniques. The organization’s primary services and programs are devoted to working with mid-career and emerging artists through collaborative residency opportunities. The Dieu Donné gallery is open to the public Tuesday - Friday, 10 am - 6 pm and Saturday 12 - 6 pm or by appointment.

About the Workspace Program

Established in 1990, the Workspace Program offers annual residencies to New York State emerging artists to create new work in handmade paper. The primary goals of this program are to encourage emerging artists to explore the creative possibilities of handmade paper and to develop this art form through a process of collaboration and experimentation. The Workspace Program is presented to the public through an annual exhibition of works produced in this residency program, as well as through print, digital, and online formats. For more information about the Workspace Program, or to learn how to apply, visit www.dieudonne.org.

Support

The artistic and educational programs at Dieu Donné are made possible with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; and Foundation support including: Lily Auchincloss Foundation, Milton & Sally Avery Arts Foundation, Inc, Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Ford Foundation - Good Neighbor Program, Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, The Minnow Fund, The New York Community Trust, The O’Grady Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts and The Partnership Fund for New York City along with major individual support.