

Hoodline

"Question Your Surroundings At R/SF Projects' 'Premium Emporium'"

Written by Carrie Sisto

February 2, 2017



Israeli-born, San Francisco-based artist Hadar Kleiman will open her first solo show tomorrow at a Tenderloin gallery that aims to foster a Bay Area art renaissance.

The installations of 'PREMIUM EMPORIUM,' opening at R/SF Projects, are made largely of items scavenged at estate sales and thrift stores. Kleiman combines the influence of mall lobbies, prom photo backdrops and the disorienting carpet patterns of Las Vegas hotels into a multi-media exhibit that aims to inspire "calculated observations to galvanize awareness," according to the show's press release.

'So, at the end of the day, she's sort of gesturing towards these subversive details that go unnoticed—maybe not quite a warning, but a message to us all to look a bit closer at our surroundings and ask more questions,' explained R/SF Projects co-owner Lauren Licata.



Mall Wall by Hadar Kleiman.

The focal point of the show is a massive, faux-marble storefront called 'Mall Wall' that displays a collection of miscellaneous but related items in a framed, lighted window.

Most of the works include salvaged goods, and Kleiman utilizes unique artistic methods to exhibit her finds. For example, she picked up the time-consuming art of Terrazo—making composites out of rocks, shells and recycled glass—to create a triptych that depicts the triple-diamond streak on a winning slot machine.



PREMIUM EMPORIUM by Hadar Kleiman.

R/SF Projects strives to be an interruption in the fine arts space, the gallery's owners—Anička Vrána-Godwin, Kaitlin Trataris and Lauren Licata—told Hoodline. The gallery launched in February 2016 as a pop-up in a space at 24th and Mission Streets rented as a sublet through an ad on Craigslist. The three owners, who met while studying at the San Francisco Art Institute, quickly built a community that supported 46 events in four months.

The community's momentum was so strong that when then the lease was up in the Mission, "it was easier to keep going than to stop... even though it was really hard to keep going," Trataris said.

After an intense search across the city for a new location, the three landed in their current space, a former chiropractor's office at 1050 Larkin St. They have transformed it into a 2,000 square foot gallery that includes a main lower room, a loft exhibition space and six private artist studios. R/SF Projects has a three-year lease on the space, with the option to extend for another three years, Licata said.

"We couldn't be happier with our new Tenderloin location—we're surrounded by like-minded young businesses and there's a great energy on Larkin in particular," Licata said. The gallery is right next door to Mr. Holmes Bakehouse - the three hosted the bakery's holiday party in their recently-opened space last year - and they are just up the street from the Saratoga.

"And, with all the diverse foot traffic walking by daily, we are very excited to welcome people of all types into experiencing art in ways they might have never imagined," Licata added.

The owners want to keep the space versatile, so the current schedule mixes an artist's show for four weeks, followed by a three-week stint of short-term exhibitions, one-night performances and other events. In the weeks between specific shows, R/SF will host events like stitch-n-bitch workshops - to provide a creative space for people to meet likeminded community members - and also immersive performances combining sound and art through programs like its MASQUE series.



PREMIUM EMPORIUM by Hadar Kleiman.

The owners all agreed that they are very hands on with the artists they host, pushing them to create enough to fill the whole gallery. Kleiman has previously exhibited in other Bay Area galleries, including SAFEhouse Arts, Ridge Space and the Asian Art Museum. But this show "is her boldest, most profound work yet," Vrána-Godwin said.

"It's definitely not your standard gallery show—so it truly aligns with the underground art scene that we are trying to foster," Licata added. 'We were immediately drawn to her immersive, playful, and perceptive approach to art making, as well as the way her exhibitions regularly command active viewership.'

The opening reception kicks off at 7pm tomorrow, February 3rd, and the exhibit will be on display until February 26th.