



“When the king received the gift, and looked at the portrait, he had an intuitive understanding of reality. In terms of Buddhist teachings, he realized that the world we see with our eyes is just a reflection of a reality that we cannot quite grasp. But the story also gives an insight into the power of painting, suggesting that this thing that is a reflection of truth can also somehow *be* truth, and that the best art can give its viewers enlightened understandings of the world.”

—excerpt from *Color, A Natural History of the Palette* by Victoria Finlay.

Reflective Pool

Fiona Aboud, Alex Griffin, Amir Hariri, Matthew Namie, Scott Roberts, Ceaphas Stubbs

September 2 – 30, 2017

Opening Reception: Saturday September 9, 7-9pm

Curated by Heather Zises

The Cluster Gallery, 200 6th Street, 3E, Brooklyn, NY 11215

Gallery Hours: 12-6pm, Wednesday – Saturday and by appointment

The Cluster Gallery is pleased to present *Reflective Pool*, a group exhibition featuring works by Fiona Aboud, Alex Griffin, Amir Hariri, Matthew Namie, Scott Roberts and Ceaphas Stubbs. The show will be on view from September 2 through September 30, 2017, with a public opening reception on September 9, 7-9pm.

In this juried exhibition, artists explore the concept of a reflecting pool. Inspired by the feature found commonly in landscape design, a reflecting pool offers an illusory sense of depth and clarity by reflecting its surroundings, yet literally consists of a shallow pool of water. In playful dialogue with the myth of Narcissus and Echo, this exhibition questions self-perception in the digital age and how to achieve clarity about oneself amidst a world of distortion. Working in a variety of mediums, each artist explores territories of the collective psyche that reflect the self in the form of a landscape or an abstraction.

Brazilian-American photographer **Fiona Aboud** documents lifestyle and culture through many lenses of perception. In her recent series, *Imperception*, Aboud collaborates with water to create portraits of the female form which illustrate the distortion of self-perception. By photographing her subjects on land and then projecting the images into water, each nude portrait is obfuscated with aquatic refractions, representing the truth-bending properties of the mind's eye. Infused with swirling veils of energy from the physical world, each portrait challenges the self to determine one's own perception.

American painter **Alex Griffin** creates powerful landscapes that move in-between the past, present and future. Taking on multiple roles of painter, historian and storyteller, Griffin reconstructs realities by transplanting subjects into unfamiliar scenes such as a field, a room with a piano, a walkway, or a pool. By mining photographs of American domestic life from the late 19th century to present day, Griffin builds the surfaces of his canvases with layered narratives that reflect the psychological currents living within those images.

Iranian multimedia artist **Amir Hariri** creates sharp, geometric tableaux that reconstruct the subconscious gestures and compositional balance inherent in abstract painting. Focusing upon the visceral and formal qualities of decay, Hariri looks to the construction site as an architectonic theater to examine ideas relating to notional weight and austerity, material roughness and systems in entropy. In *Calligrapher's Fountain*, Hariri pays homage to the work of Iranian modernist architect Houshang Seyhoun and his mausoleum for the renowned Safavid calligrapher, Mirza Ahmad Neirizi. Through connections of time, history and memory, the composition seamlessly blurs the lines between evolution and decay.

Known for his stylized portraits of celebrities, American painter **Matthew Namie's** works portray both grit and glamour. Inspired by Street Art, Pop Art and the beauty industry, Namie employs negative space to represent his subjects. In his new series *Development*, Namie reflects his own personal, spiritual and physical evolution in the past year. Faced with the imminent death of his chronically ill sister, the artist has charted his personal development against his sisters with soft, biomorphic shapes shrouded in heavy black and perforated with sharp jagged edges. Comprised of dual realities, the series offers both sides of a reflecting pool.

Los Angeles native **Scott Roberts** explores cosmological and ontological concepts surrounding the ideas of existentialism and the human condition in his work. Having experienced close familial death early on in his life, themes of mortality both haunt and enlighten his work. Robert's large triptych *Echo*, explores notions of self-reflection, doubt and the illusions that surround us when we embark on a new journey. Playing with the idea of Narcissus and Echo as twin peaks over a reflective pool, the composition also questions the role of the Fates and the horizon as gateway between the two worlds. From a contemporary perspective, the distorted reflections of the mountains question where our virtual and actual worlds begin and end, and the illusions that accompany both sides.

American artist **Ceaphas Stubbs'** photographs are an exploration in narrative weight and meaning, as well as nostalgia and pleasure. His works function in a space that is the intersection of photography, sculpture, and painting, where images move back and forth between different meanings. Stubbs photographs his hand-made collage-sculptures and installations to showcase volume and gravity, light and perspective, and vibrant color. By conflating the difference between what the eye sees and what the camera sees, each work incites the viewer's imagination and challenges their perception. ...*Nothing More Than Daydreams...Sweet Melodies Reciting Words that Will Never be Said*...reflects Stubbs' ongoing investigation of pleasure and desire as well as their shadowy underpinnings of yearning and loss.