



I Dare! / Dare I? **January 11 - February 10, 2018**

Nancy Margolis Gallery is pleased to announce *I Dare! / Dare I?*, a group exhibition featuring four gallery artists: Anne Canfield, Gregory Hayes, Aubrey Levinthal, and Melodie Provenzano. The show will be on view January 11th through February 10th, 2018, with an opening reception on Thursday, January 11th from 6pm until 8pm.

Many artists think about trying something radically new, but hesitate. This exhibition dared four artists who have each mastered artistic methods and processes to try something artistically different, to attempt an unfamiliar technique or a new skill. What will be the outcomes of their risk-taking? Will the results be disappointing, or might they lead to the discovery of new advances in their work? The four artists participating in *I Dare! / Dare I?* have created a small number of original paintings that reflect experimental thinking and a new process or theme, whether through working on a larger scale, changing a tried-and-true process, tackling a difficult color, or revisiting an old project with fresh eyes. How have these artistic risks affected each artist's thinking in moving forward? What will they—and we—learn from the ways they have pushed beyond their familiar, artistic boundaries?

Anne Canfield paints small-scale, intimate scenes of solitary places, lush, overflowing gardens, dense mountains seen from a distance, and exteriors of homes with warmly lit windows. Each of her paintings emits quietness through her use of meticulous detailing, a focus on naturalism, and a notable absence of figures occupying her scenes. Canfield's attention to detail together with her palette of saturated pinks, greens, and yellows, gives her paintings a luminescent, jewel-like quality. Her oil paintings are done on wood panels, often accompanied by graphite drawings on paper. Canfield remarked: "It has been my longtime daydream to develop a graphite drawing on panel as I would a paper work." Thus, for this exhibit she is challenging her artistic process in two distinct ways. First, she will produce a full graphite drawing on panel without paint, something she's never done before but has often thought about trying. Second, she has increased the scale of this graphite composition to nearly double the usual size of her work. Producing a pencil drawing on panel has proven challenging for Canfield, but the outcome will surely satisfy her curiosity: "...I see the paints waving over there and want to give them work. Alas, I am too curious as to where the graphite on panel can go in my world, and I cannot refuse a dare."

Gregory Hayes is a series-based painter whose most recognized bodies of work, *Color Array* and *Amalgamation*, are created through a methodical process of dripping spherical beads of acrylic paint onto a flat canvas. In his *Color Array* series, Hayes begins by drawing a graphite grid onto the surface creating one-quarter inch squares. He then drips one swirling, multi-colored bead of paint into each square, producing a pristine composition of concentric squares of vibrating color harmonies. In his newer series, *Ribbon*, Hayes aims to abandon this grid structure: "For the *Ribbon* series of paintings, I want to push past the typical end point of my process and make that the new beginning point." Hayes's "typical end point" is the moment at which his paint dries. In the *Ribbon* series, however, he considers this the beginning of the painting process. Instead of dripping spheres of acrylic paint onto a canvas, Hayes squeezes one-quarter inch strips—or "ribbons"—of paint onto a smooth surface. Like his *Color Array* drips, his ribbons are created through a continuous stream of multi-colored paint, imbuing

each strip with a unique and swirling gradient. Once the ribbons dry, Hayes peels each one off individually and rearranges them onto a canvas in even, horizontal strips—partially overlapping one another—so that the final compositions resemble flattened landscapes of softly shifting colors. The *Ribbon* paintings that Hayes is creating for this exhibition are more than five times larger than those he typically produces: “The creation of these paintings on a large scale felt critical since size exposes the effects of the process with greater depth, revealing the relationship between the interaction of the paint’s properties and my manipulation of it.”

In addition to two large *Ribbon* canvases, Hayes has produced five new works on paper, measuring 20 x 20 inches each, that mark the conception of a new series altogether. Similar in process to his *Ribbon* series, his *Reticulum* paintings rely on the manipulation of paint after it dries. Rather than arranging the strips of acrylic paint into stacked rows, however, Hayes has looped and knotted numerous thin ribbons together to form tightly knit clusters of saturated color. The end results are sculptural, three-dimensional forms that he mounted to museum board. He reflects: “Creating this new work has helped teach me to make better use of my intuition, and depend less on the systemic processes that define much of my earlier work. By opening up my process in this way, I challenge myself as a painter and hopefully push painting as a whole further.”

Aubrey Levinthal chose color temperature and a particular pigment as a means of challenging her regular practices: “Recently in the studio I have been thinking about how to paint temperature, specifically the cold weather of the east coast.” Levinthal’s new body of paintings aims to capture the frigid stillness and the unique quality of light that are so characteristic of New England winters. In one oil-on-panel painting, she masterfully depicts a view from her Philadelphia studio window, in which the viewer can smell and touch the radiating chill from the whitewashed panes of glass. One unifying element in each of these new paintings is the use of a specific color: white. Levinthal explains that she spent so long trying to avoid painting with white and has since come full circle to reclaim the color in her compositions: “For many years I worked away from white, fearing it become too recurrent.” Embracing the theme of this exhibition, Levinthal dared herself to revisit the precarious color: “Here I’m using white very purposefully in each painting: as thin, drafty air, as the physical but shifting shape of snow, as harsh, bright light.”

Melodie Provenzano is known for her hyper-realistic still-lives that exquisitely capture the textures and surface qualities of her subjects, such as metallic Christmas bows or glass figurines. Provenzano gave birth to her first child in August 2016. She explains that shortly after having her son, she began a new composition of a large black-and-white bow with the intention of painting “something that my son would enjoy looking at as his eyesight developed.” The bow was still incomplete one year after she started it, owing to her limited free time. When asked to create work for this exhibit, Provenzano challenged herself to finish the 48 x 48 inch bow, as well as incorporate a new element that would elevate the bow beyond a single painting. She decided to create a multi-canvas installation—with the large bow as its centerpiece—using a silk-screened wallpaper that she designed in the past. Provenzano has adhered her wallpaper onto the surfaces of eight stretched canvases that surround the black-and-white bow. On top of the wallpaper, she has embellished the canvases with additional paintings, allowing each canvas to stand on its own. Provenzano’s installation brings a new coherence and vitality to previously worked materials.