

# The NEWS

## A TCHOTCHKE GALLERY

With digital galleries taking centre stage this season, the new online space **Tchotchke Gallery** is now home to its inaugural exhibition called *When Life Doesn't Give You Lemons*



Facing page: Joani Tremblay. *Hope in the Dark*. 2020. Oil on linen. Above: John Madu. *John in the bedroom in Arles*. 2020. Acrylic paint and ink on canvas

WORDS BY NOUR HASSAN  
IMAGES COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS AND TCHOTCHKE GALLERY

TCHOTCHKE GALLERY IS A PROGRESSIVE DIGITAL ART GALLERY that came to fruition as the quarantine passion project of Marlee Katz and Danielle Dewar. Katz and Dewar have been friends and colleagues in the blue-chip gallery landscape for a while and had always entertained the idea of opening a gallery that spoke to an audience and global artist roster who didn't take themselves too seriously. Tchotchke Gallery's inaugural exhibition, entitled *'When Life Doesn't Give You Lemons'* launched online on 8 September and will run until 30 October 2020.

"We found most of our artists through Instagram research, as well as looking at MFA programs," explains Katz. "The theme for *When Life Doesn't Give You Lemons* is essentially a question of what keeps you motivated during crazy times like these, when things get unpredictable."

The artist roster includes 20 dynamic artists from over six countries such as Lisa Armstrong Noble, Maddy Bohrer, Sydney Bowers, Daisy Dodd-Noble and Sevede Hallac.

"In reimagining the meaning of the word tchotchke, we wanted to place less emphasis on the sentimental and therefore lack of financial value that a tchotchke can have, and make it something people associate with real value," says Dewar. "We want to come off warm

and inviting – never intimidating. The logo is a Russian doll, which people immediately recognise as a tchotchke."

Katz and Dewar have used video conferencing tools to connect, curate and build relationships with the artists. They have conducted studio visits online and have developed an educational pillar to their gallery content, allowing visitors to virtually get to know each artist better through a series of questions.

"Inclusivity is also very important to us; this moment in time allows for workshop visits with artists all around the world," says Dewar. "If we weren't all in lockdown, this wouldn't be as normalised. A great example was Christian Perdix in Berlin, who took us around his space on Zoom."

Turkish artist Sevede Hallac comments on being able to participate in the gallery's online exhibition, "COVID-19 has thoroughly integrated art into a virtual environment where worldwide borders have been removed and art is made more accessible internationally. We are experiencing this new order together in a changing world. With Covid, we witnessed the digitalisation of experiencing art and I think we will continue to move in this direction." ■

View *When Life Doesn't Give You Lemons* at [tchotchkegallery.com](http://tchotchkegallery.com) until 30 October 2020