

J. CACCIOLA GALLERY

NEW YORK DUBLIN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Women Painting Women

Shelley Adler, Edwige Fouvry, and Kim Frohsin

September 4 – 27, 2014

Opening Reception:

Thursday, September 11, 2014 6pm-8pm



Edwige Fouvry, *Baigneuse*, 2014.
59 x 59 inches, oil on canvas.

Art history is rife with female imagery, almost all of it painted by men. The masculine idealization of women, often referred to as the “Male Gaze,” has been a staple of art historical debate for decades now, with no resolution in sight. After all, the fact that a male artist, Titian, painted the “Venus of Urbino,” or the very macho Picasso painted abstractions of his lover Dora Maar neither adds nor subtracts from the paintings’ aesthetic qualities as masterpieces. But though the “Male Gaze” may incorporate the highest qualities of art, it does call into question the definition of womanhood. With rare exception (Artemesia Gentileschi, Mary Cassatt, Berthe Morisot, Marie Laurencin among the notable few), women’s definition of themselves is nearly absent from the history of art. It is only recently that artwork by women has been taken seriously by the art establishment, and indeed is still woefully underrepresented in major collections and galleries.

J. Cacciola Gallery’s exhibition *Women Painting Women*: Shelley Adler, Edwige Fouvry, and Kim Frohsin is part of the contemporary push to serve as a corrective to that imbalance, in this case through figurative imagery. The works by Adler, Fouvry, and Frohsin present us with three distinct views of female experience, but the exhibition is not an implicitly political one; it is first and foremost an aesthetic one, presenting the work of three brilliant contemporary practitioners of art’s most traditional medium, painting.

Canadian Shelley Adler’s women in her series “Body Language” present us with confidence of a different sort; the confidence to interact with others, to take one’s place among human society. Most of the women in this series look directly at us, and even those that don’t nonetheless present themselves as part of our immediate experience, as if they are still aware of us, still part of the conversation.

Adler achieves this immediacy and intimacy of interaction through a simplification of form reduced to its most important fundamentals: shape, volume and color. Through these basics, Adler endows her subjects with a thoroughness of being, their personalities made perfectly clear in their poses, their choice of clothing, the look in their eyes. Adler’s women are more than merely comfortable in the world, they engage it, meet all comers on equal terms.

The women in the work of French born Edwige Fouvry (now living and working in Belgium) embody a powerful, barely contained inner energy which seems to seep through the flesh of the body into the surrounding environment, and indeed pushes into the canvas itself. We see this in

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the large work "Nageuse" ("Swimmer"), where Fouvry's aggressive brushstrokes of color define the physical details of the female figure emerging from the water, as if the bones and flesh of her face and body prickle with their own corporeal power.

Fouvry's sense of an internal vitality is equally evident even when her figures are in repose, such as in the image of a sleeping woman in the painting "Allongee Jaune" ("Elongated Yellow"). The woman's pose may be passive, but the strength of her life, her essence, impresses itself on the viewer. Despite the pose of sleep, there is nothing acquiescent here, certainly not in the personality of the woman nor in the execution by the artist.

For Kim Frohsin, born in Atlanta, now living and working in California, temperament is less the issue than the exploration of mood and the environment where that mood thrives. We don't often see the faces of the women in her paintings, but their poses and the color-created environment in which they exist tell us a great deal about them. Whether seated or running, standing, reclining or kneeling, the women here exude confidence in their bodies and proclaim ownership of the environment where their bodies thrive.

Frohsin renders her figures through a simplicity of means, using broad areas of color to define shape, pose, highlights, and shadow. The running figure in "Miss Olsen Prancing," for example, has the solidity of flesh as well as the lightness of a passing breeze. She moves through her surrounding landscape with the grace and assurance of someone who claims the world as hers to live in without restraint.

J. Cacciola Gallery's *Women Painting Women: Shelley Adler, Edwige Fouvry, and Kim Frohsin* presents the strength of the artists and the women they depict. They are twenty-first century women, taking their place in the world and in art history, no longer defined by the "Male Gaze."

For additional information, images and an exhibition list of works, please contact Jenny Montgomery at J. Cacciola Gallery, 212 462 4646 or info@jacciolagallery.com.

Upcoming:
The Middle Watch
Cian McLoughlin
October 2 – November 15, 2014
Opening Reception: Thursday, October 2nd 2014, 6 – 8pm