

COREY HELFORD GALLERY

For Immediate Release:

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Los Angeles, CA

ALESSANDRA MARIA & LAUREN MARX



OPENING RECEPTION SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, FROM 7-11PM
ON VIEW NOVEMBER 5 – DECEMBER 10, 2016

On **Saturday, November 5th**, 2016, **Corey Helford Gallery (CHG)** in Los Angeles presents two artists **Alessandra Maria** and **Lauren Marx** with an outstanding new body of work in Gallery 2.

In the process of creating her own world, Alessandra Maria and Lauren Marx each share in their use of powerful and traditional iconography to tell a story. Whether in Maria's iconic, Renaissance-inspired works, or in the natural elements of Marx's illustrations, they are reworking icons in a manner that is entirely their own. "Animals have always been an essential part of storytelling, symbolism, and spirituality. I am continuing this tradition by producing works centered around fauna to tell stories that relate to creation, mortality, the violence of nature, and my personal life," shares Lauren Marx of her new body of work, "**Flesh Blood Bone**". Based in St. Louis, Missouri, Marx creates beautiful vignettes that speak to the cycle of life. Combining pen and ink with various mixed media, her paintings offer a raw depiction of birth and death. Influenced by scientific illustrations and the Baroque period, Marx presents these cyclical phenomena in visually appealing ways, often fusing the chaotic elements of nature into stylized compositions with an emphasis on design.

"Flesh Blood Bone is my first attempt to acknowledge, and accept, aspects of my personal history that have caused me anxiety and heartache. As in my previous work, all subjects are depicted as animals. The series of narrative works centers around my immediate family, and the interactions and emotions that

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occur between the four members. Recently, I felt that I could finally address these feelings on paper. I have illustrated my separation from the issues presented here, by depicting them as otherworldly, divine animals that exist in a habitat removed from reality. The four family members, which includes myself, become abstracted versions of themselves. I plan on continuing to center my work around aspects of my life and past. I am seeking freedom from my anxiety through my artwork.”

Alessandra Maria, based in Brooklyn, New York has harnessed the dynamism of religious symbols to craft her new series, “**The Virgin, The Whore, and the Mother**”. “Iconography can tell a story- it’s subtle power shapes us,” she says. Though her art is contemporary, there is a deliberate attempt to make each piece feel like an “artifact” or a sacred object. Her glimmering muses are a modern feminist idol, Maria’s definition of feminine divinity in the face of objectification and dehumanization. “Throughout history icons have served to illustrate the predominant ideals of a given social group. In Abrahamic religions, feminine power has been embodied in three forms with few exceptions: the virgin, the whore, and the mother. Put another way: women’s most virtuous roles were defined insofar as their being an object or vessel for someone else.”

“I’m driven by the prevalence of these outmoded concepts of feminine potential in contemporary society. The narratives of women in popular culture are still crafted around demonizing and dehumanizing ideas of what women can or should be. I believe an important means of addressing this problem entails going back to the source. Numbered as a means of guiding the viewer’s journey, this body of work is an exploration of Eden without the traditional trichotomy and tells the story of the artist coming to terms with her whole being. Seen both as a whole and individually, these works are intended to be meditated upon and drawn from, as a source of strength.”

The opening reception for Alessandra Maria and Lauren Marx will be hosted Saturday, November 5th, 2016, from 7-11pm in Gallery 2 at Corey Helford Gallery. The reception is open to the public, and the exhibition is on view through December 10th, 2016.

ALESSANDRA MARIA

Alexandra Maria Peters, aka Alessandra Maria, is a Brooklyn-based artist whose inspiring naturalistic works are made with graphite and carbon pencil, gold leaf, and black ink. In addition to these traditional materials, she has an unconventional surface that she works on – coffee stained paper. The dark brown ground, mixed with the gray pencil, adds a soft touch to her realistic-looking figures. Working within these media, her art has tended towards a poignant reinterpretation of feminine iconography, often contextualized and adorned with natural elements like flowers and butterflies, drawn in a style that often conjures fairy tales and other fantastical stories. Here, beauty is a facade for a deeper, potentially darker meaning: “The work has several feminist themes within it– essentially I’m re-working icons from a different era, in a manner that feels like it’s still my own. I definitely try to keep the aesthetic a little bit modern so as to not feel directly lifted from the Renaissance era. I want it to feel contemporary in and of itself, but there definitely is an attempt to make it feel like an *artifact*— something that has age or which might be a sacred object. That’s deliberate; there’s something very interesting about that.”

LAUREN MARX

St. Louis, Missouri based artist Lauren Marx explores the intricate process of decay with her surreal and often grotesque drawings and paintings. Animals become enmeshed in each other’s flesh as tendons and sinew rip apart, exposing their innards. While the subject matter often triggers an initial reaction of

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repulsion, Marx's ornate line work and graceful compositions are pleasing to the eye. "Animals always have been, and always will be, my passion. They have been the subjects of my drawings ever since I was a child. I blame it on weekends spent at the Saint Louis Zoo and endless hours watching "National Geographic's: Mutual of Omaha: Wild Kingdom". They influenced my desire to learn about biology while attending high school. While in high school, I began collecting bones, feathers, and books. Over these past few years, my passion grew to zoology, cosmology, and mythology. In the spring of 2012, I finally combined my obsessions into one drawing: "Galactic Collision". The theme surrounding that piece has been the focus of my work ever since.

COREY HELFORD GALLERY

Corey Helford Gallery (CHG) was first established in 2006 by Jan Corey Helford and her husband, television producer and creator, Bruce Helford (Kevin Can Wait, Anger Management, The Drew Carey Show, George Lopez, The Oblongs) and has since evolved into one of the premier galleries of New Contemporary art. Its goals as an institution are the support and growth of young and emerging, to well-known and internationally established artists, the production and promotion of their artwork, and the general production of their exhibits, events and projects. CHG represents a diverse collection of international artists, primarily influenced by today's pop culture and collectively encompassing style genres such as New Figurative Art, Pop Surrealism, Neo Pop, Graffiti and Street Art, and Post-Graffiti. After nine years in Culver City, CHG re-located in December 2015 to a robust 12,000 sq. ft. building in Downtown Los Angeles, seven times larger than its original space, where it continues to host exhibitions within the heart of the city's art community. The current space boasts three separate galleries, each of which house individual artist and group exhibitions, whereas the main gallery offers 4,500 sq. ft., providing total immersion for its attendees. New exhibitions are presented approximately every four weeks. For more information and our upcoming exhibition schedule, visit coreyhelfordgallery.com and connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Corey Helford Gallery Los Angeles

571 S Anderson St (Enter on Willow St)

Los Angeles, CA 90033

Tel. 310.287.2340

Open Tuesday-Saturday, Noon to 6pm

coreyhelfordgallery.com

Press and Media Inquiries:

Aaron Feteri

aaron@reckoningpr.com