

For Immediate Release:
March 10th, 2016
Los Angeles

COREY HELFORD GALLERY

MIHO HIRANO & R. LEVEILLE



**OPENING RECEPTION SATURDAY, MARCH 26, FROM 7-11PM
ON VIEW MARCH 26 – APRIL 16, 2016**

On Saturday, March 26th, 2016, Corey Helford Gallery in Los Angeles presents an exciting two-woman exhibition by Miho Hirano, in her US debut “Beauties of Nature”, and R. Leveille’s “Savage Garden”.

Though Japanese artist Miho Hirano and American painter R. Leveille come from two different worlds, their paintings arrive at an alluring vision of the human spirit. Through feminine and vibrant imagery, their collective works explore each artist’s emotions and sexuality in the context of the modern and natural world. Living and working in Chiba, Japan, Miho Hirano finds herself close to nature that is akin to the delicate beauties portrayed in her paintings. For her first major exhibition, “Beauties of Nature”, Hirano has created a series of ten new oil paintings that express her dream world where humans and nature coexist. Her ethereal subjects often appear at one with their natural environment, whose hair flows into flowering tree branches or flowing strands of seaweed. Using hair as a female identifier in her work, Hirano portrays different attitudes and emotional interpretations of women, including her own alter-ego. She also adorns their hair with elements of flora and fauna, each carrying their own symbolic weight, as in her “Temptation” series. The series depicts a young girl decorated by flowers that attract bees and hummingbirds, representing her power to seduce and the role that her accessories play in her seduction. “I usually paint women; because I am a woman. Each of my female characters can be seen as a self-portrait of mine in some way, such as sharing my desire to dress up. However, they are not myself in a mirror, but someone else who takes over my consciousness. One of my goals as an artist is to explore how we adorn ourselves with accessories, and how this plays a role in our identity.”

Working out of her studio in Massachusetts, R. Leveille creates modern and sexy images of figures that luxuriate in a garden of another kind, reclining on lofty flowerbeds or in modern day salons like fashion-forward goddesses. Leveille’s

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exhibition titled “Savage Garden” presents a series of fourteen oil and mixed media paintings that delve into colorful new territory. “In the work there is a very deliberate choice to bring in multiple references and stylistic modes of how the figure, the female form and sexuality has been referred to and combining it with my perspective as a present day woman artist”, she says. Key to Leveille’s work is her unique palette and design sensibilities; her paintings embrace a play on the iconic stylings of Pre-Raphaelite to Modern artists throughout history, from Titian and Vigee Lebrun to Gerda Wegner and Jim Shaw, mixed with a combination of gold leaf and bright colors that guide the emotion of her portraits. “The images in “Savage Garden” are provocative, playful and pointed. They are a sort of present “passion play” of reality and unreality. Louboutin stilettos are frequently represented alongside 18th century wigs and octopus tentacles, Jeffrey Deitch as Prince Charming, Larry Gagosian as Batman, and direct and luscious sexuality, to deliberately draw the curtain on the stage of the moment we are in right now.” Her new paintings also experiment with traditional symbolism, as in her portrait of a couple making love titled “Flowers”, which re-appropriates the femininity of flowers. “Reinterpretation of symbolic elements are throughout the works. Taking the imagery of flowers, historically used to represent female sexuality, and redefining it as boldly masculine. Using the somewhat manic faces and features of the mid century pin-up aesthetic with the fluid nubile bodies of 19th century feminine artistic ideals. And how that combination feels and creates something new,” she explains. “Reinterpreting often sexist imagery and depictions of women as a woman painter is a way to own the images in give them back again through a different lens.” The opening reception for Miho Hirano and R. Leveille will be hosted Saturday, March 26th, 2016, from 7-11pm at Corey Helford Gallery. The reception is open to the public, and the exhibition is on view through April 16, 2016.

Miho Hirano

Based in Chiba, Japan, Japanese artist Miho Hirano first studied at the Musashino Art University, and began painting professionally soon after her graduation in 2008. Her dreamy oil paintings are inhabited by ephemeral spirits at one with their natural environment, whose hair flows into flowering tree branches or flowing strands of seaweed. She adorns their hair with accessories made of flora and fauna like swarming bees, hummingbirds, and goldfish, each carrying their own weight as elements of beauty and symbols of Hirano’s identity. In essence, each of her paintings represents a world where humans and nature can coexist. In 2016, Hirano exhibits her first major solo show “Beauties of Nature” at Corey Helford Gallery in Los Angeles. For more information about the artist, please visit mihohirano.strikingly.com.

R. Leveille

Massachusetts based painter Rebecca Leveille, who exhibits under the moniker of R. Leveille, is influenced by the work of Gerda Wegener and Jim Shaw, along with painters such as Titian and Vigee Lebrun. The key to her work is her unique palette and style sensibilities; her work embraces a play on the iconic elements of the Renaissance and Pre-Raphaelite and combines them with modern symbolism and reflections of the present moment. Her combination of gold and vibrant colors along with sinuous lines and interpretive anatomy guide the emotion of her images. Through her distinctive visual elements, she is able set a vivid stage to explore her subjects’ sensuality, sexuality, and identity. For more information about the artist, please visit www.rleveille.com.

Corey Helford Gallery

Corey Helford Gallery was established in 2006 by Jan Corey Helford and her husband, television producer and creator, Bruce Helford (Anger Management, The Drew Carey Show, George Lopez, The Oblongs). Corey Helford Gallery represents a diverse collection of Contemporary artists influenced by today’s pop culture, encompassing the genres of New Figurative, Pop Surreal, Graffiti and Street Art. Artists include Josh Agle (Shag), Ron English, D*Face, Chloe Early, Eine, Natalia Fabia, Camille Rose Garcia, Liz McGrath, Richard J. Oliver, Herakut, Kukula, Sylvia Ji, Eric Joyner, Brandi Milne, Korin Faight, Mary Jane Ansell, Martin Wittfooth, Lori Nelson, Hannah Yata, Camilla d’Errico, Hikari Shimoda and more. Renowned for its notable exhibitions, the gallery has presented “Charity By Numbers,” which was co-curated by Gary Baseman and featured an unprecedented lineup of artists including Mark Ryden, Marion Peck, Shepard Fairey, Todd and Kathy Schorr, Camille Rose Garcia, and Michael Hussar, as well as “La Noche de la Fusion,” an epic Carnivalesque festival and solo exhibition for Pervasive artist Gary Baseman. In 2010, Corey Helford Gallery partnered with Bristol’s City Museum & Art Gallery for the transatlantic collaboration “Art From The New World,” a world-class United Kingdom museum exhibition showcasing work by a formidable group of 49 of the finest emerging and noted

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American artists. Corey Helford Gallery presents new exhibitions approximately every four weeks. For more information and an upcoming exhibition schedule, please visit coreyhelfordgallery.com.

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