

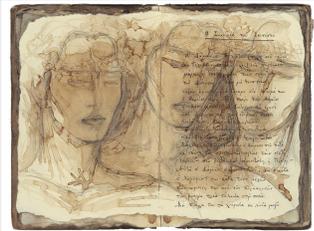
KATHRYN
MARKEL

FINE ARTS
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**KATHRYN MARKEL FINE ARTS PRESENTS A GROUP EXHIBITION
CURATED BY NANCY COHEN**

Drawing on Memory features 4 artists in New York City
March 28th - May 4th, 2024

NEW YORK, NY — March 7th, 2024 — Kathryn Markel Fine Arts is excited to announce an upcoming group exhibition curated by Nancy Cohen. Titled *Drawing on Memory*, the exhibition features four artists – Alexandra Athanassiades, James Esber, Margie Neuhaus and Debra Priestly. The exhibition will run from March 28th – May 4th at the gallery’s 529 West 20th Street location, and it will run concurrently to Cohen’s solo show at the gallery’s 10th Avenue location.



The works in this exhibition are united by the subtle ways that memory played a role in the artists’ development of the conceptual underpinnings. Each artist has an expansive practice where drawing is an essential element, allowing their ideas to travel across media. Its importance is apparent in each one’s larger body of work.

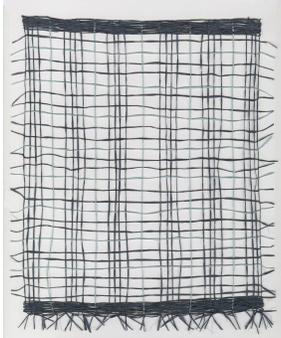
Born and living in Athens, Greece, Alexandra Athanassiades’s work draws on the history of ancient Greek sculpture. The horse as a character and form has been present in her work for 40 years, standing in for her personal family history while simultaneously referencing her interiority and independence. The tenderness of her bronze sculptures evidences the found materials of their original structures and belies the solidity of the material. More recently, she has been responding to the 20 th century Greek poet C.P. Cavafy, whose work has been said to “hold the historical and erotic in a single embrace.” Athanassiades’s drawings on top of printed book pages and installations could be described in a similar way.

While Athanassiades’s influences reach far back in time, James Esber mines a more recent and particularly American experience. His vibrant drawings and paintings both compel and repel us. It feels fitting that AI is among the sources used in deriving his unexpected juxtapositions. In contrast to the publicly accessible sources of his layered images are the relationships between the characters in his work, many of which reference memories from his childhood and, more recently, his experience of being a parent. The images in the work are familiar, yet somehow remain unnamable and indescribable. The lines between drawing and painting, figuration and abstraction blur in Esber’s work, where the line is electric and mutating forms are evident throughout.



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Margie Neuhaus's subtly complex drawings and weavings share Esber's connection to mark making and shape shifting. Neuhaus's work explores continuity and change within a system, as reflected in natural and manmade structures. She invents systems to create two- and three-dimensional structures that test the boundaries of the systems they establish. A source of the transformations and empty spaces in her work are the memories of her childhood in the Catskills, where unused, deteriorating hotels and tilting hay barns stood in contrast to new construction. There is a bare, stripped-down quality in Neuhaus's work, which evokes a sense of contemplation that speaks to empty spaces and abandoned places.

In Neuhaus's and Debra Priestly's work, the silences are as important as the actions. Priestly's work has the most apparent connection to memory, as its focus is a personal archive of family history, ancestry, and cultural preservation. Priestly exhibits a major diptych, McCoy and Veora Priestly, in which images of her parents softly emerge from an almost ghostly white space. Her poetic and restrained drawings are accompanied by three of Priestly's newest sculptures—black clay figurative vessels that reveal a solidity and intimacy that also quietly and powerfully call the viewer to attention to notice the beautiful details and powerful metaphors.



IMAGE CAPTIONS

Alexandra Athanassiades, "*Cavafy: The Retinue of Dionysus?*" 2017, giclee print, 17 ¼ x 23 ½ in

James Esber, "*Bow Tie*" 2023, acrylic on paper, 12 x 9 in.

Margie Neuhaus, "*Untitled (2024.1.5)*" 2024, raw silk and linen paper, 13 x 11 in.

Debra Priestly, "*Black Vessel 9*" 2022, stoneware, glaze, 5.5 x 3.5 x 3.5 in.

MEDIA CONTACT

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ABOUT KATHRYN MARKEL FINE ARTS

Established in 1975 with the belief that significant contemporary art can be beautiful as well as visually and intellectually rigorous, Kathryn Markel Fine Art is committed to the experience of discovery and collecting at the highest level. Committed to serving a deep network of collectors and institutions, Kathryn Markel Fine art showcases a diverse array of primary market artists, unified by excellence in their craft, compelling intellectual framework, and a love of the art-making process. <https://www.markelfinearts.com/>

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