

PRESS RELEASE

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Try a Little Tenderness



“Head of Glory” © Tyanna J. Buie

(Aug 22, 2012 – Milwaukee) *Try a Little Tenderness*, the inaugural exhibition of the Milwaukee Artist Resource Network’s MARNsalon 2012/2013 exhibition series, opens Friday Sept 7, 2012, (6-8pm) at the MARN Gallery (5407 W Vliet St, Milwaukee), and will run through Saturday Sept 29. MARN will also host a private Curator Night event (see below for details) in addition to a public critique for the exhibition on Saturday, September 15, from 11am-2pm. All are welcome to attend and join the conversation.

In response to an exhibition purview posed by guest curator **Pamela Fraser** which questions the dismissal of empathy, nostalgia, and sentimentality in contemporary art practice and critical discourse, curatorial protege Ana Hansa-Ogren (under the mentorship of Jennifer Johung) has selected the work of five emerging artists whose practices address this line of inquiry through a diverse array of conceptual and formal means: **Michael Kautzer**, **Tyanna J. Buie**, **Julie Novakofski**, **Jamie Berg**, and **Michael Kutzer**.

"Ideas and incarnations of emotional expression and nostalgia in contemporary art are largely considered taboo- in academic and gallery settings, as well as in the greater scope of current critical discourse." says MARN curatorial protege Ana Hansa-Ogren. "As a result of this, emotional and empathetic aspects of art making and viewing are rarely critically discussed. They remain, however, key elements in the role of art and creativity in contemporary culture. By engaging this subject matter in a critical way this group of artists is boldly traversing risky territory; the discussion which emerges from this exhibition is sure to be both rich and challenging."

"I'm interested in bringing together artworks with shared concerns but not necessarily anything visual in common, creating categories around interests, which transcend medium-specific boundaries." says guest curator **Pamela Fraser**. "It's exciting when works that don't seem related at first glance are suddenly understood to be in complex conversations with one another. In the case of the subject of 'tenderness', curating and writing about these issues are avenues to further develop ideas not only about sweetness and sentiment, but also about criticism, kitsch, the subtext of taste (class), and a mind/body split that is suspicious of emotion and passion. At the heart of 'tenderness' are the subjects of optimism and levity; which I consider to be the ultimate focus of my work in all areas, including my own paintings."

Curator Night:

MARN will host a private Curator Night event for the exhibition (curators and gallerists please contact curator@artsinmilwaukee to attend) on Thursday September 13, with special guest Pamela Fraser. Curator Night is a valuable opportunity to share creative and professional criticism and feedback with exhibiting artists, connect with emerging talent, and strengthen professional relationships with art professionals working on both local and national levels.

On guest curator Pamela Fraser:

Artist, writer, and curator Pamela Fraser is represented by Casey Kaplan (NYC) and is an Assistant Professor at the University of Vermont. From 2008-2011, Ms. Fraser was co-founder and co-director of the exhibition and event venue He Said She Said in Oak Park, IL with Randall Szott. Exhibitions there included presentations by Sheila Pepe, Carroll Dunham, and Nikhil Chopra. In 2011 she co-curated the exhibition Spectral Landscape (with Viewing Stations) and film and video screening Color Films, with John Neff at Chicago's Gallery 400. She recently initiated an exhibition space in her office at UVM called Office Hours, whose first show was an exhibition of Joshua Abelow's paintings. Fraser's art and curatorial work has been featured in Artforum, Bad at Sports, and the New York Times. She has lived and worked in New York, LA, and Chicago and currently resides in Charlotte, Vermont.

On curatorial protege Ana Hansa-Ogren:

Artist and curator Ana Hansa-Ogren is MARN's 2012/13 curatorial protege, and Co-director of the MARNsalons Exhibition Committee. Hansa-Ogren earned her BFA from UW Madison in 2011. Recent exhibitions include Levitas/Gravitas (MARN Gallery), Burial Practice (Sculpture Courtyard, UW Madison), This Is What You Really Need [collaboration w/Eva Odessa Maxwell] (MPCA), and t/f (7th Gallery). Working with sculptor Nadeem Mesbah, Hansa-Ogren transformed the top floor of an old school building in Milwaukee's Bayview neighborhood into a vibrant studio and project space, Home Studios, which seeks to serve as a rotating exhibition and community critique venue offering opportunities to artists working in locally under-represented mediums of installation, performance, and video.

On mentor Jennifer Johung:

Artist, writer, and curator Jennifer Johung is Associate Professor in the Department of Art History at UW Milwaukee and Director of the Art History Gallery. She is affiliated faculty in two interdisciplinary graduate programs in Media, Cinema and Digital Studies (UWM English and Film Studies), and in Buildings, Landscapes, Cultures (UWM school of Architecture and Urban Planning and UW Madison Art History). She is also founder of Jennifer Johung Projects; an engine for launching dialogues, supporting new work, and promoting ongoing collaborations and conversations amongst artists, between artists and scholars, and across contemporary art and architecture. Johung holds a PhD in Performance Studies from UC Berkeley, and has an extensive curatorial and exhibition history.

About MARN and the MARNsalons Exhibition Series:

The MARNsalon Exhibition Series is a multi faceted professional development program offering artists in-depth critique, targeted networking opportunities, peer portfolio review, and the opportunity to exhibit in an established gallery.

MARN seeks to connect artists within the local *and* national art community by establishing relationships between creatives and professionals working in Milwaukee, Chicago, L.A., New York and beyond. Through engagement with the MARNsalon program artists are granted a valuable level of exposure and the chance to develop both creative and professional aspects of their practices. MARN aims to strengthen and support the Milwaukee arts community by offering artists and art professionals opportunities to expand critical discourse and enliven development in art and curatorial practice on a local level, while engaging nationally recognized curators in a globally relevant dialogue.

Gallery Hours and info:

The MARN Gallery is located at 5407 W Vliet St and is open to the public Monday-Tuesday from 12-5pm, and Fridays from 12-6pm. ***Try a Little Tenderness*** is on view Friday Sept 7- Saturday Sept 29, 2012. Free street side parking is available. The gallery is wheelchair accessible.

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