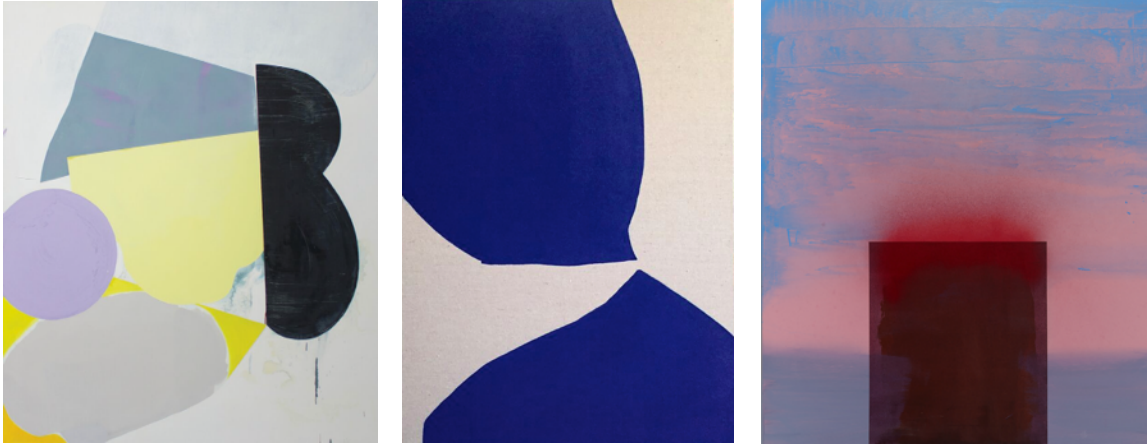


WILDING CRAN GALLERY

"... a pointy toe boot up the backside"
POST-ABSTRACTION FROM HOUSTON
A Group Exhibition Curated By Christian Eckart

September 12 - November 7, 2015
Opening Reception: Saturday, September 12, 2015 - 6-9PM



Los Angeles - Wilding Cran Gallery presents *"... a pointy toe boot up the backside"* *POST-ABSTRACTION FROM HOUSTON*, a group exhibition curated by internationally acclaimed, Houston based artist Christian Eckart. The exhibition will feature new works by David Aylsworth, Sharon Engelstein, Tad Griffin, Geoff Hippenstiel, Paul Kremer, Joe Mancuso, Marcelyn McNeil, Aaron Parazette, Susie Rosmarin and Brooke Stroud. Eckart has curated this project with the intention of reinvigorating a nascent cultural dialogue between the Houston and Los Angeles contemporary art communities, highlighting some of Houston's talents working in the progressive vernaculars of post- abstraction. By bringing a glimpse of Houston's contemporary art community to Los Angeles' attention, Eckart hopes to continue to cultivate a meaningful cultural reciprocity and exchange between two centers that share an analogous potential for expansion.

Now internationally lauded as a major contemporary art center, Los Angeles' evolution as a cultural contender in the export of contemporary art has been gradual and relatively recent, but its earliest foundations were laid in the burgeoning artscape of the 80's. Eckart draws parallels between Los Angeles' cultural apotheosis from a once regional art center to an arbiter of contemporary taste on an international scale, to Houston's shared potential for growth and expansion. LA's shift from an import-only model to an import and export model was gradually consolidated by the strength and proliferation of its schools and studio programs, supported by its self-buttrressing art community and by notable art luminaries like John Baldessari, Robert Irwin, John McCracken and Edward Ruscha and a subsequent generation including artists such as the late Mike Kelly, Paul McCarthy, Lari Pittman and

WILDING CRAN GALLERY

Diana Thater, all of whom have contributed to the transformation of LA into an undeniable locus of top tier cultural production.

A world-class cultural center in many ways, with some of the nation's best institutions and collections, including the Menil Collection, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Houston's emphasis has long been on cultural import rather than home-grown output, despite having produced some internationally extolled talents like Jeff Elrod, Mark Flood and Trenton Doyle Hancock. Eckart hopes to help rectify this imbalance by vetting Houston's artists in LA and creating opportunities for them in a major art capital, thereby strengthening their visibility at home. According to the curator, the growth of Houston's deserving contemporary art scene is dependent upon its own self-recognition and the external support drawn from increased viability in more established art centers like LA. Eckart has curated this project, fittingly framed by an irreverent tongue-in-cheek imperative, to motivate a continued productive exchange between LA and Houston. In Eckart's words, the title is: "just another way of saying "howdy." I like the idea of art being challenging and a bit of a kick in the butt, so to speak." As Eckart points out, cultural centers exist in tangential dialogue and often inform each other's histories and practices, it's just a matter of "which communities are communicating. "This exhibition is an effort to open those lines of communication.

The exhibition will feature approximately 20 works of painting and sculpture selected by Eckart from a diverse group, ranging from emerging, mid-career and established artists. While the works share a return to formal abstraction, and its plastic vocabularies, each artist appropriates and expresses its material and conceptual concerns in singularly progressive ways, reinvigorating its traditions with contemporary energy and timely inventiveness. Among those featured are artists Paul Kremer, a conceptual painter exploring the tropes of minimalism and Color Field Painting; Joe Mancuso, an artist whose approach to abstraction incorporates organic forms and topographies; Susie Rosemarin, whose vibrant approach to geometric abstraction courts kaleidoscopic op-art; and Aaron Parazette, an artist who grew up in LA, studied at Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, and produces colorful geometric hard-edge works inspired by surf and skate culture.

ABOUT CHRISTIAN ECKART

Canadian born (Calgary, Alberta, 1959, American citizenship since 1995) international artist Christian Eckart, formerly based in New York (1984-2003), settled in Houston, Texas at the beginning of 2003. During the 20 years he lived in NYC and up to the present Christian Eckart's work has been the subject of over 60 solo exhibitions, including many museum surveys, and has been included in over 150 group exhibitions. Christian Eckart's work is represented in many important private and public permanent collections including those of The Guggenheim Museum, N.Y., The Museum of Modern Art, N.Y., Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna, The Chicago Art Institute, The Detroit Institute of Art, the Broad Art Foundation and The Art Gallery of Ontario as well as many others throughout North America, Europe and Asia. Until recently he split his time between NY and Berlin, 1996, and then NY and Amsterdam, 1997 - 2002. Christian Eckart was an instructor at The School of Visual Art, NY, from 1994 through 2002, the Glassell School of Art of The Museum of Fine Art Houston 2003 - 2005 and he recently held visiting professorships at both the University of Houston and Rice University. He has lectured

WILDING CRAN GALLERY

extensively throughout North America and Europe, realized many private commissions, organized group exhibitions and published a number of essays and articles.

ABOUT WILDING CRAN GALLERY

Wilding Cran Gallery, founded by Anthony Cran and Naomi Wilding, is a Los Angeles gallery representing international contemporary artists working in a variety of mediums. Since its April 2014 launch in the burgeoning arts district of downtown Los Angeles, the gallery has presented nine exhibitions in the main gallery and has hosted several special events from live music to art performances. The gallery also serves as a platform to support local and universal social causes through arts education programming and philanthropic work. Additionally, Wilding Cran programs Unit B, an independent creative project space in the storefront adjacent to the gallery.

Gallery hours: Wed - Fri, 11am– 6pm, Saturday, 12pm– 6pm, Closed Sunday-Tuesday.
www.wildingcran.com

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

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Image credits:

left: Paul Kremer *Peck* 2015, 24 x 18 in, acrylic on canvas

Centre: Marcelyn McNeil *Piled On* 2015, 76 x 60 in, oil on canvas

Right: Brooke Stroud *1000 Sunsets* 2015, 48 x 42 in, acrylic on panel