



Lucas Blalock, *Animated Dad Shirt*, 2020. Dye sublimation print on aluminum, 51 1/8 x 41 3/4 x 1 1/4 in.

The future perfect will have arrived

Curated by Bridget Mullen

**Lucas Blalock, Lindsay Burke, Sophia Flood,
Autumn Knight, Dana Lok, and Kenny Rivero**

January 7 - February 10, 2023

Opening Saturday, January 7th, 6-8pm

Shulamit Nazarian is pleased to present *The future perfect will have arrived*, a group exhibition curated by New York-based artist Bridget Mullen. Featuring works by Lucas Blalock, Lindsay Burke, Sophia Flood, Autumn Knight, Dana Lok, and Kenny Rivero, the exhibition will run concurrently with Mullen's solo exhibition *Sensory Homunculus*.

For *The future perfect will have arrived*, Mullen joins together artists working across painting, drawing, photography, collage, sculpture, and performance for their unwavering dedication to pursuing questions over solutions. Regardless of the relative distances between the artists' ideas, aesthetics, and resulting works of art, the exhibition points to an attentive caring for curiosity mediated through process and the possibilities such faith in inquisition affords.

The future perfect will have arrived

In what world might we hang a portrait not of a loved one but of Earth's closest asteroid? *Bennu*, a painting by **Sophia Flood**, captures our nearest asteroid's likeness on canvas scrap nestled in plaster nestled in wood. The asteroid Bennu is an amalgamation of planetary material that may or may not hit Earth next century. It is essentially core-less, without its own center, a structure made up only of other structures. With Flood, as with the other artists presented here, there's a sense that ideas don't come onto the scene fully formed but are being chased during creation. They've each invented their own idea-generating structure that prods an experience wherein even the self is mutable and will be changed.

Flood's paintings stage cores as held within forms that cradle or ripple in/out. There's a peeling back of layers—not to expose the inner workings of a subject or reveal some truth, but rather to expose how layers hold and withhold, are seen and unseen. Flood's forms can be skeletal, floral, or geological as a way of implicating time, tethering her paintings to something tactile and pushing against what could be engulfing abstraction. In *Lady*, a half-skeleton half-body heat map feels like a fitting subject to be moored within cavernous forms, like some kind of infrared night scene through a window. When I see Flood's dusk toned paintings made with, I imagine, the slowest of gestures, I consider my own eventual un-layering and think, "Hold this, now hold this, now hold this even longer."

Lindsay Burke's paintings and drawings often involve the creation of android-like figures as strategies for catharsis. By making a replica to embody what a feeling looks like on someone else, they can wear the scars, tears, and ruptures functionally so we don't have to. With these body doubles there's a hope, perhaps implicit in all art making, that meaning might be revealed. Except by the time you get to what you've been waiting for—the event, the completed project—you've changed and so the thing you're looking for has changed. It's not the same because you aren't the same. Burke's work explores the nature of point-of-view and interpretation, but it's also about personal agency. It has to be futuristic to have a place to live out and sustain the expectations of being a woman, daughter, friend, partner, person. Inventing figures born from pipes, illusionistic and abstract backgrounds, or art history itself, allows for the itchiness of some feelings to exist exquisitely and matter-of-factly in other, less burdened bodies.

In Burke's paintings, and in many of the works in the show, a structure had to be invented to carry out the work of the subject. For **Autumn Knight** that structure is time-based. Known for staging absurdist and experimental performances using didactic lesson, talk show, or drama therapy as delivery system, Knight mingles playful, uncertain situations with exploratory movement and cultural references via language. Moments of engagement don't get carried to typical ends; actions are clipped, flipped, abandoned, or repeated. Nothing is put into a movement that isn't felt in that moment. Nothing *should* happen. Nothing is pushed towards a tidy or specific end. Structure to Knight could be riffing off the objects left behind in a space; doing a live zoom performance, giving out her number, and taking calls; toggling between multiple camera points-of-view; or interacting with the audience to engage the race, gender, and power dynamics present. Knight sees that things have always been collapsing around us, but she makes the future feel like a thrill we can alternately rage into and take cozy little naps through.

There's power in turning things over or inside out, to reconstituting the world through your specific lens, to diffusing power where there shouldn't be, and embedding power where it should. **Kenny Rivero**'s paintings have this charge; they work like talismans that carry the visible and invisible aspects of his experience. Rivero

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creates a lexicon wherein beliefs are suspended in map-like street scenes, iconic superheroes, symbolic letters, and statistics. It feels important that his paintings resist hyper-reality, that what has empowered these works remains fuzzy, half-there, seemingly in a dream state. There's magic in allowing the feelings that got you there—love, grief, fear, hope, and longing—to propose and instigate a way forward with wit and grace.

Dana Lok's work often depicts stage sets, platforms, tables, tablecloths, desktops, or grassy grounds on which she can divulge, spread, slice, feast, and suss out the working parts of tangly propositions. Often she incorporates flexible, varied words into the structure of her compositions, pushing language's relativity. Written language within the intermediary of the two-dimensional plane begs questions and, coupled with the images, creates an index: a structure to parse out the players. In *Predictive Knit*, something like bruises rubbed into the paper interrupts the precise rendering of irregular stitches. The words "precede" and "follow" in the drawing give it a feeling of interplay and recontextualizes action and reaction—the experience of choice and what feels like the opposite of it. Forms tug at each other, cast nets, overshadow, and bind, generating a much more imaginatively poetic and multidimensional rendering of cause and effect.

Lucas Blalock uses materiality as consistent indicators in his photographic constructions, and I suspect his overall process is purposely varied to change up the results. Through his digital tools of stamping or smudging to create iterations, things can get pushed into comically illogical, exhilaratingly ridiculous, or darkly charming pitches. In *Film-Object (Potato)*, he flips his typical structure of distorting and reconstructing forms in 2D to 3D via a kinetic sculpture—a sluggish zoetrope-type carousel of pictures of a potato on a table. Because something is nameable doesn't mean its only assignment is language—numbers, dirt, potatoes, or even faces for that matter, can be *both* pure shape without a guarantee of symbolism, *and* be chosen for their connotations. The repetition and motion is inherently alluring. It harbors a tension from the looming promise of meaning that doubling down on an original implies.

More than revealing meaning, these works offer suggestions for how to proceed. We cannot be expected to know or encapsulate everything now. Some anti-animation, some ritual, some lesson, some care, some asteroid portrait, some android, some stage, some ghost—these inventions call out the slipperiness of expectation and knowing.

– Bridget Mullen

Lucas Blalock (b. 1978, Asheville, NC; Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY) earned a BA in Photography from Bard College in 2002, an MFA from the University of California Los Angeles in 2013, and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2011. Blalock has presented solo exhibitions at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; Abroms-Engel Institute for the Visual Arts (AEIVA), Birmingham, AL; Galerie Eva Presenhuber, New York, NY and Zurich, Switzerland; White Cube, London, UK; and Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Kleve, Germany. Select group exhibitions include *Reconstructions: Recent Photographs and Video from the Met Collection*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; *An Ocean of Images: New Photography 2015*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; *New Pictures of Common Objects*, curated by Christopher Y. Lew, MoMA PS1, Queens, NY; *Perfect Likeness: Photography and Composition*, curated by Russell Ferguson, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; and *Ordinary Pictures*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN. Blalock was also featured in the 2019 Whitney Biennial, curated by Jane Panetta and Rujeko Hockley. His works are held in the collections of Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim, the Hammer Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

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Lindsay Burke (b. 1991, Ames, IA; Lives and works in Brooklyn) received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Iowa in 2014 and her Master of Fine Arts from Hunter College, New York in 2017. In 2016 she attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine and was a participant in the Shandaken Paint School Residency in 2018. Burke held a recent solo exhibition at Marinaro Gallery, New York, NY. Select group exhibitions include Shulamit Nazarian, Los Angeles, CA; The Flag Art Foundation, New York, NY; Underdonk Gallery, Brooklyn, NY; Thierry Goldberg Gallery, New York, NY; Bosse & Baum, London, UK; and Helena Anrather Gallery, New York, NY.

Sophia Flood (b. 1984, Ipswich, MA; Lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) received her BFA from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and her MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She was a 2016 participant at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture; other residencies include the Marble House Project in Dorset, VT (2017) and the Chashama Studio Residency Program in Brooklyn, NY (2016). Her work has been exhibited at Hyperspace, Los Angeles, CA; Sadie Halie Projects, Minneapolis, MN and Brooklyn, NY; Spring Break Art Fair, New York, NY; Torrence Shipman Gallery, New York, NY; and Herter Gallery, Amherst, MA, and has been written about in *Two Coats of Paint*, *The Coastal Post*, *Hyperallergic*, and *New American Paintings*.

Autumn Knight (b. 1980, Houston, TX; Lives and works in New York, NY) is an interdisciplinary artist who works with performance, installation, video, and text. She attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (2016) and holds an M.A. in Drama Therapy from New York University. Her performance work has been on view at various institutions including DiverseWorks Artspace, Art League Houston, Project Row Houses, Blaffer Art Museum, Crystal Bridges Museum, Skowhegan Space (NY), The New Museum, The Contemporary Art Museum Houston, Optica (Montreal, Canada), The Poetry Project (NY) and Krannert Art Museum (IL), The Institute for Contemporary Art (VCU), Human Resources Los Angeles (HRLA) and Akademie der Kunst, (Berlin). Knight has been an artist in residence with In-Situ (UK), Galveston Artist Residency, YICA (Yamaguchi, Japan), Artpace (San Antonio, TX) and a 2016-2017 artist in residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem (NY). She has served as visiting artist at UC Berkeley, Princeton University, and Bard College. Knight is the recipient of various awards and fellowships: Artadia Award (2015), Art Matters Grant (2018), Rema Hort Mann Foundation Award (2019), Anonymous Was a Woman Award (2021), Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grant (2022), 2021-2022 Nancy B. Negley Rome Prize in Visual Art and a Guggenheim Fellowship (2022). Her performance work, WALL, is the first live performance work entered into the permanent collection of the Studio Museum in Harlem. Knight participated in the 2019 Whitney Biennial.

Dana Lok (b. 1988, Berwyn, PA; Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY) received an MFA from Columbia University in 2015 and attended Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2016. Solo exhibitions of her work include *One Second Per Second* at PAGE, New York (2020); *Words Without Skin* at Clima, Milan (2019); *Mind's Mouth* at Bianca D'Allessandro, Copenhagen (2018); *Soft Fact* at Clima, Milan (2017); and *The Set of All Sets* at Chewday's, London (2016). Group shows include *Le Biscuit à Soupe*, at High Art, Arles, France (2022); *Gravity, a proposal* at Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York (2022); *Jahresgaben* at Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn, Germany (2021); *Regroup Show* at Miguel Abreu Gallery (2021); *Fifteen Painters* at Andrew Kreps Gallery (2021); PAGE (NYC) at Petzel Gallery (2021); and *In Place Of*, curated by Leah Pires, at Miguel Abreu Gallery, (2016), all in New York.

Kenny Rivero (b. 1981, New York; Lives and works in New York) received his MFA in Painting and Printmaking from Yale University in 2012 and his BFA from the School of the Visual Arts in New York in 2006. His work is represented in notable public collections including The Baltimore Museum of Art; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY; El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY; The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; Collection of Thomas J. Watson Library, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; The Nasher Museum of Art, Durham, NC; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR; and Pérez Art Museum Miami, FL.