

# DIANE ROSENSTEIN GALLERY

## *Transfigured.*

Jay Kvapil  
Sarah Mikenis  
Lionel Sabatté  
Evan Whale

July 28 – August 25, 2018

Opening Reception, Saturday, July 28th, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

“The gifted artists are the great benefactors of the world. Life flows from their souls, from their heart, from their fingers.” Dominique de Menil (1987)

Diane Rosenstein Gallery is pleased to announce *Transfigured.*, an exhibition with Jay Kvapil, Sarah Mikenis, Lionel Sabatté, and Evan Whale. *Transfigured.* presents four artists in four rooms, and includes paintings, ceramics, photographs, and sculpture made in Southern California in the past year. The show’s title alludes to each artist’s process of metamorphosis from one form to another, pushing formal traditions in service of the sublime and the subversive. There is an active dialogue between creation and destruction; as a result, the nature of representation itself is both transformed and transformative.

Evan Whale’s carved photographs often confuse viewers at first. They are meticulously destroyed photographs, uniquely etched by hand or chemically altered to reveal color from the beneath the print surface – yet, they retain the visual identity of the scene. These color landscapes and botanicals are taken locally in the San Gabriel Mountains, atop the tectonic forces of the San Andreas Fault. The artist is inspired by these invisible seismic forces and he carves tremor waves into the surface of the emulsion. In one sense, the photographs are transformed by drawing and performance; they are records of time and place as well as the artist’s experience of latent anxiety of life atop the fault lines. Inspired by Edmund Burke’s 18<sup>th</sup> Century writing, Evan Whale offers a meditation on the elusive concept of The Sublime. This is his second exhibition at the gallery, having been part of *Deep End: Yale MFA Photo 2014 (Curated by Awol Erizku)* during the summer of 2014.

Lionel Sabatté is a painter and sculptor based in Paris and Los Angeles. He is interested in the living and in the transformations of the material caused by the passage of time. In *Transfigured.*, Sabatté will show his “Oxidized” paintings and Bestiary sculpture. For the paintings, he uses an acidic medium to create gestures that oxidize across a metal surface, causing organic explosions and astral convolutions. His paintings are direct and incisive, yet corrosive. In the act of creating the abstractions he cruelly devours the plate,

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as if the painting expresses itself in the rusty web. He will also show two figurative sculptures from his bestiary of concrete animals. These animals (a bear and a dog) are built in clay-like increments of concrete and steel, as if they are emerging from an excavated site. This is Lionel Sabattés first exhibition with the gallery.

Sarah Mikenis' paintings purposely challenge the relationship between the physical and the optical. Her new "Vertical Blind" paintings use oil on canvas in candy-colored stripes, seemingly draped and gathered over a skeleton of stretcher bars, as if the painting itself is a garment magnetized by static cling. The gradations of bright color and use of sculptural volume brings a Baroque sensibility to Geometric Abstraction; it is a balance between realism and fantasy, between the surface and the subliminal. Sarah Mikenis is a painter who questions how compositional pattern and tactile qualities of paint might interrupt the physical form of a painting. This work simultaneously offers up both the familiar and the fantastic. This is her first show with the gallery.

Jay Kvapil makes pottery that alludes to the landscape and intimate pictorial space, both internal and external. While the forms are deceptively simple – bowls, bottles, jars and vases – they are the sites of complex tension and radical glazes. Kvapil began making pottery again fifteen years ago, after a long hiatus (he studied tea ceremony ware at Takatori Seizan Pottery in Kyshu, Japan in 1975). His recent vessels are transformed by glazes that melt, fuse, bubble, crawl, and drip in the heat of the kiln. The result – minimal pottery forms that defy gravity - are a narration of that process, frozen in time. Kvapil hangs elegant glazes (the result of thousands of tests and experiments) that have ancient overtones, similar to Chinese Landscape painting from the Tang and Song Dynasties (1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> C.). This is his first show with the gallery.

### About the artists

**Jay Kvapil (USA, b. 1951)** graduated from University of the Pacific, Stockton, CA (1973) and received his MA (1979) and MFA (1981) at San Jose State University in California. Kvapil was the Director of the School of Art at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), and Dean of the Mike Curb College of Art, Media and Communications at California State University in Northridge (CSUN) from 2014-15. His ceramics have been shown at the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC; Couturier Gallery, Los Angeles; the Oakland Museum, Oakland, CA; Scripps College Invitational, Claremont, CA; Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan, and numerous other national and international exhibitions. The artist lives and works in Long Beach, California.

**Sarah Mikenis (USA, b. 1986)** received a BA from Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA (2008); attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (2015) in Maine; then received an MFA from University of Oregon in Eugene (2016). She had a solo exhibition

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at Nationale, Portland, OR (2018) and is included in *New American Paintings, 2018 (No. 133)*, juried by Rita Gonzalez. The artist was raised in Portland, Oregon and now lives and works in Los Angeles, California.

**Lionel Sabatté (France, b. 1975)** graduated from the *École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts*, Paris, France (2003) and is the recipient of the *Prix des Amis de La Maison Rouge*, Paris, France (2017), *Drawing Now*, Paris, France (2017) and *Yishu 8*, Beijing, China (2011). Recently, he had solo shows *La morsure de l'air*, Ceysson & Benetiere Gallery, Paris, France (2018) and *Catwalk, Please Do Not Enter*, in Los Angeles, CA (2017); and was included in *Human Condition (Curated by John Wolf)*, The Hospital, in Los Angeles (2016). The artist lives and works between Paris and Los Angeles.

**Evan Whale (USA, b. 1987)** received his BA in Photography from Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY (2009), and MFA in Photography from Yale University School of Art, New Haven, CT (2014). He has had four solo shows, most recently *Come and See, Actual Size*, Los Angeles (2017); was included in *Tomorrow's Man 4 (Curated by Jack Pierson)*, Regen Projects, Los Angeles, CA (2017) and *The Times*, The FLAG Art Foundation, New York City, NY (2017). Evan Whale lives and works in Los Angeles, California.