

Tanya Leighton

Press Release

Adrienne Rubenstein
'BLUE'

30 May – 1 July 2023

Preview: Saturday 27 May, 6–9pm

4654 W Washington Blvd, Los Angeles

“They’re flower paintings,” Adrienne says, nearly shrugging. At the plain delivery of this line, my inclination is to laugh. But she’s right. She says it with the same mellow self-assuredness that permeates the works. The painting before me is huge and blue and emitting some kind of stupefying glow. I’m transported to the edge of a swimming pool in the evening, sunset orange and pink playing off a rippling aqua. Entwined in the piece are Rubenstein talismans I’ve come to recognize: a star curling skyward, fish braiding through blue, and the aforementioned flowers, yawning and draping themselves across a scruffy field of immediate color.

And so they are, after all, paintings of tulips and goldfish—there is no heavy agenda, no cerebral explaining away to be done. Rubenstein cites Matisse posters from childhood as the origin of her visual language and keeps a 1980s birthday party invitation dotted with tropical fish and cherries on her refrigerator. Unencumbered and therefore free for unbridled exploration, her references pull from Bonnard and from the art on a 1980s novelty cup with equal measure, not that these things are so different to begin with.

Rubenstein’s subjects are the vehicles upon which she carries out her reverie. Landscapes which float like portholes or ‘windows’ in an artist’s studio. The tender ellipses in a water glass or a vase. Abstract space made mostly of flowers. Taking cues from the likes of Susan Rothenberg, forms emerge like bones beneath sand—substituting broccoli for Rothenberg’s trusty horse. Her art nods to Ree Morton as well, happily subverting critiques against ‘feminine’ art and lauding sentimentality and decoration as instructional elements.

And while the fruits of her labor are awesome, and to put it plainly, incredibly cool, the works are hardly fluff. They’re an exhaustive dissent from dogma and an insistence on joy. Rubenstein’s work isn’t choked by the need to be deep. It wrestles free of containment and brainy fodder and proudly tells the rules to get bent. This is what renders her work revolutionary and wholly vivifying; her devotion to the good, the bad and everything in between.

– Natalie Power

Adrienne Rubenstein (born in 1983 in Montreal, Quebec) lives and works in New York. She received her BFA from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in 2006 and her MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2011.

Recent solo exhibitions include 'Global Warmth and Global Cooling' at Broadway Gallery, New York and 'Bark of the Town' at The Pit, Los Angeles, both in 2021; 'Ruby in the Dust' at Deli Gallery, New York in 2020; and 'Little Shop of Horrors' at Tif Sigfrids, Athens, Georgia in 2019.

Rubenstein has organised over twenty solo and group exhibitions focusing primarily on the work of women artists including 'Forget About the Sweetbreads' at James Fuentes, New York in 2013, and Heidi Jahnke's posthumous solo exhibition at Grifter, New York in 2020. Her work has been covered in Artforum and the New York Times.

For more information, please contact info@tanyaleighton.com or telephone +49(0)30221607770.

The gallery is open Tuesday to Saturday, 11–5pm and by appointment.