

The Mechanics of Fluids
Curated by Melissa Gordon
June 21 – August 3, 2018

Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to present *The Mechanics of Fluids*, a group exhibition curated by Brussels-based artist Melissa Gordon. The exhibition explores the evolution of abstraction through the lens of feminist theory and invites critical dialogue on longstanding narratives around the genre's development. Charting a wide trajectory of approaches and techniques, *The Mechanics of Fluids* will include works by Lynda Benglis, Elisa Breton, Helen Frankenthaler, Jacqueline Humphries, Lisa Oppenheim, Laura Owens, Charlotte Posenenske, Josephine Pryde, Eileen Quinlan, Amy Sillman, and Mika Tajima, as well as an architectural intervention and work by Gordon.

The exhibition will be on view at the gallery's 509 W. 24th Street location, from June 21 through August 3, 2018. A panel discussion, moderated by art critic William J. Simmons and featuring Melissa Gordon, Lisa Oppenheim, and Eileen Quinlan, will take place on June 21, at 5:00 PM, and be followed by the opening reception.

Gordon's work examines long-held artistic histories, actions, and symbols through a range of feminist perspectives and philosophies, often confronting and challenging the canonical view of Modern art. For *The Mechanics of Fluids*, Gordon takes further inspiration from the writings of feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray and her book *This Sex Which Is Not One* (1977) to create an exhibition that offers an alternative view of abstraction. Breaking from the traditional narrative of the movement as a largely masculine enterprise, Gordon instead draws on Irigaray's belief in the femininity of fluids to demonstrate that abstraction has been significantly influenced and altered by the achievements of women.

Together, the work of all of the featured artists connects to broader philosophical queries Gordon is raising about gesture, and its relationship to the position and body of the artist. Of this, she says, "Where does a gesture arise from, and where and how does it culminate? Is it the mark upon the canvas, the position amongst other objects in an exhibition, its mark on history, or in the bodily engagement of artist and viewer?" In her writings on the subject, Gordon further states, "The gesture is liquid. It IS a liquid, adjective and noun. Lately, I've been thinking that a painting happens all over the place. And what if a canvas is just in the way?"

The artists in the exhibition were selected for their distinct creative and technical approaches as well as their conceptual rigor, providing a microcosm of creative energy and accomplishment through time. The exhibition explores formal experimentations and mastery of liquid materials, including through the work of such artists as Lynda Benglis, Helen Frankenthaler, and Laura Owens. At the same time, it expands the definition of fluidity to conceptually-driven and mixed-media installations by established and emerging generations of artists, including Lisa Oppenheim, Eileen Quinlan, and Mika Tajima, and also to notions of "states of being," captured at specific moments, as is experienced in the works of Jacqueline Humphries, Charlotte Posenenske, Josephine Pryde, and Amy Sillman.

Continuing her interest in the processes of production and display, Gordon has designed an environment that includes temporary, unfinished walls that mimic the architecture of the gallery's neighboring space and on which some of the featured work will be hung. Using rubbings of the gallery's hallways, Gordon has also created a wallpaper that will be positioned on one of the gallery's structural walls. These components foster further examination of the exhibition themes, as they connect and engage the diverse roster of works with each other and the overall space.

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Melissa Gordon was born in Boston in 1981, and currently lives and works in London and Brussels. Her paintings and silkscreens deal with the relation of a body to paint, and she often uses as subject matter the material processes of a studio practice. She continued her education at the Cooper Union School of Art in 2002 and participated in the post-graduate art program at De Ateliers in Amsterdam from 2003-2005. She has exhibited throughout the US and Europe, including shows and projects at Artists Space, New York; the

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509 West 24th Street, New York, NY 10011

Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Wiels, Brussels; Kunstmuseum Bonn and Marres, Maastricht. Her recent solo exhibitions include *Fallible Space* (2016) at The Bluecoat, Liverpool; *Derivative Value* (2016) at Overbeek Gessellschaft, Luebeck, DE; *Routine Pleasures* (2016) at Vleeshall, Middleburg, NL; and *The Gesture is a Joke* (2016) at Deweer Gallery, BE. Her first solo exhibition in New York, *A Lonely Crowd*, was in 2009 at Marianne Boesky Gallery.

For more information about Melissa Gordon, please contact Gallery Director Kelly Woods at kelly@boeskygallery.com or 212.680.9889. For press inquiries, please contact Alina Sumajin, PAVE Communications and Consulting, at alina@paveconsult.com or 646.369.2050.

boeskygallery.com

telephone 212.680.9889

fax 212.680.9897