

PRESCIENT: A FIVE-BY-FIVE (5x5) VIRTUAL EXHIBITION

Opening May 8, 2020

On view at www.feldmangallery.com/exhibition/prescient

Ronald Feldman Gallery enthusiastically announces a new online series entitled “Five-by-Five (5x5) Virtual Exhibitions.” Using the format of five works by five artists, each exhibition will feature twenty-five works selected through the lens of current pressing social, economic, and environmental concerns.

The inaugural exhibition, entitled “Prescient: A Five-by-Five (5x5) Virtual Exhibition,” features works by Eleanor Antin, Nancy Chunn, Yishay Garbasz, Mierle Laderman Ukeles, and Allan Wexler. The selection of the works, which were made prior to the COVID-19 crisis, speaks to vital issues we face today, such as fear, isolation, anxiety, border containment, and reliance on essential workers. Although the works were created years ago, their commentary may be more significant now than when they were originally made. We don’t know what lies ahead, but we firmly believe that artists will continue to constructively point the way forward.

Eleanor Antin’s famous *100 Boots* from 1971 is included, as well as several works from later series where photographic tableaux closely reference allegorical paintings from the nineteenth century that are characteristically personal, performative, and interactive. Antin engages in a dialogue with history, highlighting its dark undertones and commenting on class division, death, and societal failures while simultaneously giving the marginalized a voice. Her social commentaries provide insights into the current collapse of the job market and the devastating massive loss of life.

Nancy Chunn’s painting of a large bat from 1982 is part of a series of an upside-down world where the powerful are powerless and vice versa. In addition, colorful and densely packed paintings from the *News Stories* series are presented, as well as works from *Chicken Little and the Culture of Fear*, in which themes of outrage, cynicism, grief, and disbelief abound. Some images evoke the sense of horror felt today during the current crisis.

Yishay Garbasz’s photographic body of work explores themes of memory, history, isolation, and healing in the wake of huge catastrophes and political upheaval. Photographs taken by the artist of the Fukushima Exclusion Zone and red-hot border zones around Jerusalem, North Korea, and Belfast are presented. The visual portrayals of historically man-made borders, political upheaval, normal life being suspended, and the resulting separation of those affected parallel our current social restrictions.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles’ performances, sculptural installations, and writings have explored profoundly important societal issues: the role of women in society, cultures of work and labor, and urban and community resilience. Her “MANIFESTO FOR MAINTENANCE ART 1969!” laid out the hidden yet essential role of maintenance in Western culture—and the radical implications of actively valuing rather than dismissing or hiding it. Her recognition of, and respect for, frontline workers, the previously invisible people, resonates today.

Allan Wexler’s work can be broadly described as tactile poetry composed by reframing the ordinary. Operating in the space between architecture, sculpture, photography, painting, and drawing, he begins most often with functional objects, basic architectural elements, or even primal human activities and then morphs them into conceptual and metaphysical realms. Included are works depicting social rituals and communication which would be performed while participants are separated by walls or other barriers.

“It is difficult to know to what degree our lives will change, or have already changed, because of the COVID-19 virus. However, we *do* know that history tends to repeat itself,” says Marco Nocella, exhibition curator and a Ronald Feldman Gallery Director. “*Prescient* highlights how works by contemporary artists committed to social progress are highly relevant to the predicament we find ourselves in and are perhaps prescient indicators of what may lie ahead.”

For general inquiries and reproduction requests, contact Vince at vince@feldmangallery.com
Press Link: <https://ronaldfeldmanfinearts.box.com/s/xse9kqyet8gm5deubedpzd0poq7vq5pk>

About the Gallery

Ronald Feldman Gallery has been at the frontier of contemporary art since 1971. The gallery is located in the SoHo neighborhood of New York City and exhibits performance, photography, new media, film, painting, drawing, and sculpture. Originally named Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, the gallery was founded in November 1971 at 33 East 74th Street by Ronald and Frayda Feldman. In 1982, after one season with both uptown and downtown exhibition spaces, the gallery consolidated to its current location at 31 Mercer Street.

31 Mercer Street
New York, New York
10013
feldmangallery.com

info@feldmangallery.com

phone 212-226-3232
fax 212-941-3232