

CATHARINECLARKGALLERY



Above: Chester Arnold, *Tempest*, 2019. Oil on linen panel; 32 x 40 inches.

Chester Arnold | *Complications*

Media Room: Kal Spelletich | *Strawberry Creek Harp*

January 11 – February 15, 2020

Opening reception: Saturday, January 11 | 4 – 6pm, with artist talks at 4:30pm

San Francisco, CA: Catharine Clark Gallery opens its 2020 program with a solo exhibition of new paintings titled *Complications* by Chester Arnold. Arnold's recent works are a stark visual contrast to his acclaimed 2018 solo exhibition *Borderline*, which depicted renderings of the border wall between the United States and Mexico in various states of construction, defacement, and disrepair. By comparison, *Complications* offers a poignant meditation on "refuge" and the lengths we might undertake to escape our current political chaos. His narrative paintings depict tumultuous crossings to island sanctuaries, with rudimentary shelters perched on top of precarious slopes. Arnold notes that this "body of work reflects a mind's natural and unrestrained adventures with friction and gravity at its core," where even seemingly bucolic landscapes bear psychological weight. *Ascent of Man* (2019), for example, depicts a hiker scaling a cliff, while fields below him are consumed by smoke and fire. In other paintings, prisons and structures of detention appear in the landscapes throughout Arnold's island scenes, suggesting that utopias can also be quietly sinister.

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But while Arnold's work often explores the unsettling side of the bucolic, his formally arresting paintings also invite us into remarkable worlds that are at both dreamlike and startlingly realized. As Arnold remarks, "the world of the imagination, as a stage which reflects a life's lived experiences, has never felt so crowded at every direction with urgency. My paintings, in kind, process these endless images that morph and distill themselves into painted forms." Coinciding with the artist's exhibition, the gallery is pleased to announce that the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art is acquiring a major painting by Arnold, *Beyond This* (2018), for its permanent collection.



Arnold's exhibition is complemented by a Media Room presentation of Kal Spelletich's installation sculpture, *Strawberry Creek Harp* (2019), which was commissioned for the artist's 2019 mid-career survey exhibition at St. Mary's College Museum of Art, *Kal Spelletich: Significance Machines and Purposeful Robots*. The sculpture responds to William Keith's painting *Strawberry Creek* (ca. 1890s), which is held in the museum's collection and on loan to Catharine Clark Gallery during Spelletich's presentation at the gallery.

Spelletich explains, "I create experiences that explore the human desire for transcendence because ultimately humanity will prevail over technology." In conceptualizing the piece, Spelletich visited Berkeley's Strawberry Creek and positioned an electronic harp made from repurposed materials in the creek bed. The harp tracked the water's motion via a detached robotic device. The electrical harp generated notes that responded to the creek's variable speed and velocity, inviting a deeper conversation about relationships between nature and transcendence, ideas that are central to American art history and humanism.

In conjunction with the artist's presentation, the gallery is pleased to announce that St. Mary's College

Museum of Art will acquire Spelletich's *Clasping Hands (In Supplicatio Praying Hands)* (2014) for its permanent collection.

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Please join us for an opening reception on Saturday, January 11 from 4 – 6pm, with artists talks at 4:30pm.

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Above: Chester Arnold, *Complications*, 2019. Oil on linen panel; 36 x 44 inches.

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For press and sales enquiries, contact Anton Stuebner at associate@cclarkgallery.com or 415-399-1439

Gallery Hours for Spring 2020:

Tuesday – Friday: 10:30am – 5:30pm

Saturday: 11am – 6pm

[Also in January 2020:](#)

Catharine Clark Gallery at UNTITLED, ART San Francisco | Booth #C22

January 16 – 19, 2020 | Pier 35 | 1454 The Embarcadero

Featuring recent works by Julie Heffernan, Laurel Roth Hope, and Katherine Vetne

Plus, a Special Projects presentation of *FLOOD* by Deborah Oropallo and Andy Rappaport

<https://untitledartfairs.com/san-francisco/>

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CHESTER ARNOLD's paintings convey the complexities of the human psyche. His compositions often present skewed perspectives that often place the viewer at a remove, above unfolding narratives.

In 2008, the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art highlighted Arnold and other recipients of the 2005 Eureka Fellowship. In 2010, the Nevada Museum of Art presented a solo exhibition, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, with an accompanying catalogue. Additional solo exhibitions include the American University Museum, Katzen Art Center, Washington, D.C.; and the Sonoma County Museum, California.

In 2017, Kelly's Cove Press published a monograph of Arnold's work titled *Evidence: Painting by Chester Arnold 1989–2017*. In March 2018, Arnold's work was featured in the Invitational Exhibition of Visual Arts at the Academy of Arts and Letters Gallery in New York, NY, and he was honored with an award through the Art Purchase Program.

Arnold's work is represented in multiple public collections, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Crocker Art Museum, the Nevada Museum of Art, the di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art, the Tacoma Museum of Art, and the San Jose Museum of Art. In December 2019, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art acquired *Beyond This* (2018), a major painting from Arnold's 2018 exhibition *Borderline*. In 2021, the artist will be the subject of a mid-career survey exhibition at the Fresno Art Museum, California. Arnold lives in Sonoma, California, and has been represented by Catharine Clark Gallery since 2003.



Kal Spelletich, born and raised in Davenport, Iowa, earned his Bachelor of Fine Art from the University of Iowa and Master of Fine Art from the University of Texas at Austin, both in the field of Media Art. Spelletich has performed, exhibited, and lectured worldwide, collaborating with scientists, musicians, and politicians in Namibia, India, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, Croatia, France, Czech Republic, England, Slovakia, and Austria.

In 2019, he was a resident artist at Recology SF. He built artificial organs during a residency at Stochastic Labs, Berkeley, California. Spelletich was also included in the 2019 Ars Electronica Festival in Linz, Austria.

Spelletich's work appeared in numerous exhibitions over the past three decades including the de Young Museum, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Exploratorium, San Francisco; and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, among others. In 2019, Spelletich was the subject of a major mid-career survey exhibition curated by April Bojorquez, *Kal Spelletich: Significance Machines and Purposeful Robots*, at St. Mary's College Museum of Art, Moraga, California. The exhibition was accompanied by an attendant monograph with essays by Tanya Zimbardo, Assistant Curator of New Media at SFMOMA, and by Anuradha Vikram, as well as a foreword by Lauren McDonald, Museum of Art Director at St. Mary's College Museum of Art. Spelletich lives and works in San Francisco, California where he is represented by Catharine Clark Gallery.