

# CATHARINE CLARK GALLERY



Above: Timothy Cummings, detail of *Ornaments*, 2020; acrylic on board; 24 x 18 inches unframed, 25 ¼ x 19 inches framed.

## Timothy Cummings: *Muse* in conjunction with BOXBLUR

November 14 – December 23, 2020

BOXBLUR performances with Monique Jenkinson/Fauxnique (November 14), Rufus Wainwright (November 21), and Helen Shumaker (December 5); additional details below

Media Room: Hans Op de Beeck: *The Girl* (2017): <https://cclarkgallery.com/exhibitions/op-de-beeck-the-girl-media-room>

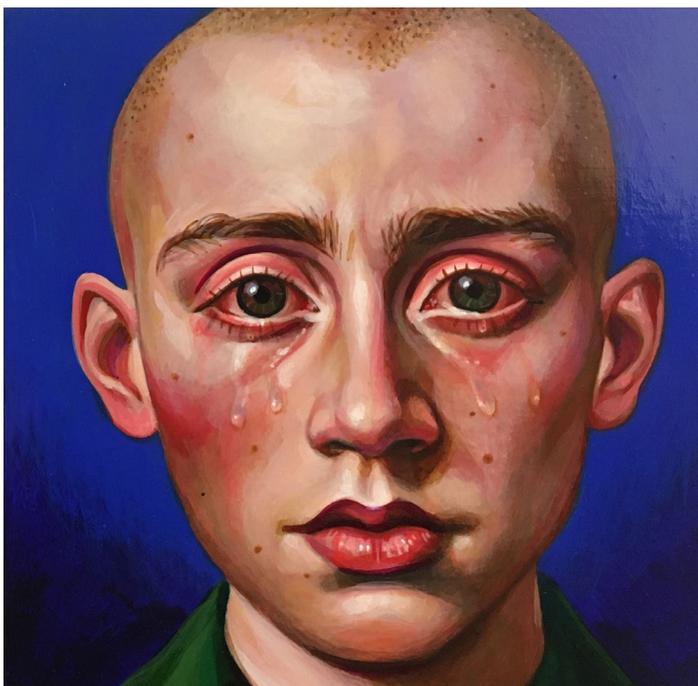
Viewing Room: Elyse Pignolet: *Boys Will Be Boys*: <https://cclarkgallery.com/exhibitions/pignolet-boys-will-be-boys-2020>

Office Gallery: Virginia Wagner: Solo Presentation

Opening reception: Saturday, November 14 from 12 – 6pm, with special opening day performance by Monique Jenkinson/Fauxnique from 2 – 6pm. Admission is limited to 10 guests at a time; click here to register via Eventbrite (free): <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/timothy-cummings-muse-with-live-performance-by-fauxnique-tickets-127249846717>

San Francisco, CA: Catharine Clark Gallery closes its 2020 program with *Muse*, a solo exhibition of paintings by Timothy Cummings in conjunction with BOXBLUR. As the artist's first major presentation at the gallery since his 2014 solo exhibition *Cloverleaf*, *Muse* marks a strong homecoming for Cummings whose work is informed by his early years in San Francisco and its ethos of queer expression and creative experimentation. The exhibition's title draws on the classical ideal of the muse as a source of artistic inspiration located outside

of the self. Sometimes embodied and other times abstract, a muse asks those who call upon it to surrender to unknown wellsprings of invention that exist outside of a singular genius. Within our present moment, we find muses all around us through collaboration, through creative community, and through chosen families of artists, performers, and thinkers that inspire us to envision livelihoods outside of our selves. Cummings, in turn, welcomes us into an imaginative lifeworld of intimate and sensitively rendered portraits that reflect on the unbounded space of creative self-fashioning.



Above: Timothy Cummings, *Portrait #4*, 2020; acrylic on board; 5 x 5 inches.

Cummings's figures often employ style as both a mode of self-defense and fabulous self-expression. In the painting *Ornaments* (2020), a young man with a buzz cut in a grey muscle t-shirt stares out sternly, even threateningly, as he holds his index finger to his mouth in waiting or anticipation, his forearm bedecked in jewel-toned bangles. Both playful and startlingly direct, Cummings's subject project an irreverence and self-assuredness unmarred by gender codes. In other works, Cummings depicts young men in tears as part of what the artist describes as a "proverbial Wailing Wall" that responds to his own overwhelming sadness in light of the violence, disease, and political upheavals that have defined our everyday reality in 2020. Rendered with touching sincerity, these paintings valorize vulnerability and emotional honesty over coolness.

In the spirit of the muse, BOXBLUR – the gallery's non-profit initiative to bring performance into dialogue with visual art – **presents three special events with performers (muses) who have inspired Cummings's creative vision:** Monique Jenkinson/Fauxnique (November 14), Rufus Wainwright (November 21), and Helen Shumaker (December 5).

**Cummings's exhibition is inaugurated by a special opening day performance by Monique Jenkinson/Fauxnique**, a former Headlands Center for the Arts resident and de Young Artist-in-Residence resident whose collaboration with BOXBLUR began in 2016 with *Disintegration*, an improvisational work about vulnerability and gender choreographed in response to Kambui Olujimi's *Just Because We're Magic Doesn't Mean We Aren't Real*, a site-specific sculpture of interlocking platforms and the centerpiece of Olujimi's 2016 solo exhibition, *What Endures*.

**A longtime friend of Cummings through San Francisco's drag and club circuit, Jenkinson's performance draws on the gender slippage in Cummings's work while raising larger questions about how we relate to real time and space during Covid-19.** Fauxnique will perform during the opening reception on November 14. The performance is free to the public, with admission limited to 10 visitors at time. Advanced reservation at the following link is highly encouraged: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/timothy-cummings-muse-with-live-performance-by-fauxnique-tickets-127249846717>. The gallery will seek to allow all visitors admission, though a wait may be required to ensure social distancing.

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Above: Timothy Cummings, *Rufus*, 2020; acrylic on board; 12 x 12 inches.

On November 21, BOXBLUR hosts a special, intimate concert with acclaimed singer-songwriter Rufus Wainwright, whose close friendship with the artist has resulted in multiple collaborations and intersections between Cummings's painting and Wainwright's music. While tickets are sold out for Wainwright's concert, BOXBLUR will post highlights of the event at a later date. In advance of Wainwright's performance, Cummings has created a life-size theatre set inspired by 19th century puppets and theaters—a nod to Cummings' own history as a radical puppet maker and to the imagery and allusion in both his and Wainwright's work, both of which explore LGBTQ+ identity, adolescence, sexuality, coming of age, psychology, equity, and justice. Though *Muse* was conceived prior to Covid-19, the history of puppetry as an art form to animate and convey the needs

of human society, particularly during difficult times, are as relevant a reference as ever. The idea of puppets as a proxy for human experiences is particularly cogent in this moment of danger associated with physical encounter.

On December 5, BOXBLUR presents a rare performance by actor and director Helen Shumaker. A revered figure in avant-garde theatre in New York and the Bay Area, Shumaker is best known for her collaboration with queer playwright Philip-Dimitri Galas (1954 – 1986), a creative partnership that culminated in the iconic one-woman show *Mona Rogers in Person* (1985), which was an inspiration for Cummings's early in his career. For her BOXBLUR commission, Shumaker will perform select readings by Galas, as well as of other writings by queer playwrights and poets who inspired his work and her performance.

Timothy Cummings's *Muse* is accompanied by a special Media Room presentation of *The Girl* (2017) by acclaimed Dutch artist Hans Op de Beeck, which opens on Tuesday, November 17. Op de Beeck's video work opens with a view of a stately home as it undergoes a process of ruination, supposedly the original home of the only protagonist, an adolescent itinerant girl, who bears witness to different landscapes and urban environments in varying states of dereliction and dilapidation: a dark forest, a vast landfill, a gas station, a highway landscape, a meadow, a factory site and a misty lake. Reflecting on adolescence, urban decay, and the unconscious haze of drug abuse, *The Girl* invites viewers into an unsettlingly ethereal and dreamlike world that meditates on vulnerability and precarity.

Catharine Clark Gallery and BOXBLUR thank the following lead sponsors for their support of this season's program: the Abrahamson Family Collection and Trust; Meyer Sound Laboratories; and the McEvoy Foundation for the Arts.

**Additional BOXBLUR programming:**

Special Sign-Adding Event for Nina Katchadourian's *Monument to the Unelected* (2008/9 and ongoing)

Saturday, Nov 14, 2020 at 1PM PST

Register via Zoom Webinar at the following link: <https://zoom.us/j/93564789365>

Prior to Cummings's opening on Saturday, November 14, Catharine Clark Gallery co-hosts a special event for Nina Katchadourian's *Monument to the Unelected* (2008/9 and ongoing), which features lawn signs created by the artist featuring the names of every candidate who ran for President of the United States and lost.

Katchadourian has invited eight first-time voters, one at each location where the work is being exhibited, to add the 59th sign to the installation. The event will be co-hosted by Pace Gallery, New York; Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco; and all six of the presenting sites: Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Scottsdale, AZ; Grand Central Art Center, Santa Ana, CA; The Transformer Station, Cleveland, OH; moCa Cleveland, Cleveland, OH; Roots Community Health Center, Oakland, CA (BOXBLUR); Private home, Madison, WI (Abrahamson Family Trust and BOXBLUR).



Above: Timothy Cummings, *Donald Envisioned as Sissieretta Jones*, 2020; acrylic on panel; 20 x 20 inches unframed, 21 3/8 x 21 3/8 inches framed.