

# CATHARINE CLARK GALLERY



Above: Katherine Vetne, detail of *Brides de Gala*, 2019; casein and gold point on chalk ground panel; 30 x 30 inches. Photo Credit: John Janca.

**Katherine Vetne | *Whatever I See I Swallow***

**Media Room: Brigitte Zieger | *Eldorado Wallpaper***

September 7 – October 26, 2019

Opening reception: Saturday, September 7, 2019 from 4 – 6pm; artist talk at 4:30pm

**San Francisco, CA:** Catharine Clark Gallery opens its Fall 2019 program with *Whatever I See I Swallow*, Katherine Vetne's debut solo exhibition with the gallery. Vetne's newest sculptures and drawings expand on themes of desire, consumption, and mainstream womanhood that were at-play in her acclaimed, site-specific installation *Guilty Pleasure*, which was previously exhibited in the gallery's 2018 summer group exhibition, *We Tell Ourselves Stories...In Order To Live*. Made from over 70 pieces of melted Avon lead crystal, Vetne's installation raised questions about how we perceive the value of heirlooms and decorative objects, by transforming formerly useful vessels into amorphous, non-functional forms that, through multiple interventions, are reimagined as works of art.

For her current exhibition, Vetne imagined an "idealized, mainstream woman and the decorative

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adornments of her life,” and how her possessions – lead crystal, silk scarves, ornate furniture – suggest a lifestyle that’s affluent and socially normative. Drawing its title from the poem “Mirror” (1961) by Sylvia Plath, *Whatever I See I Swallow* invites viewers to literally and metaphorically reflect upon how we relate to material objects and consumer goods as signifiers of status, well-being, and cultural acceptance.

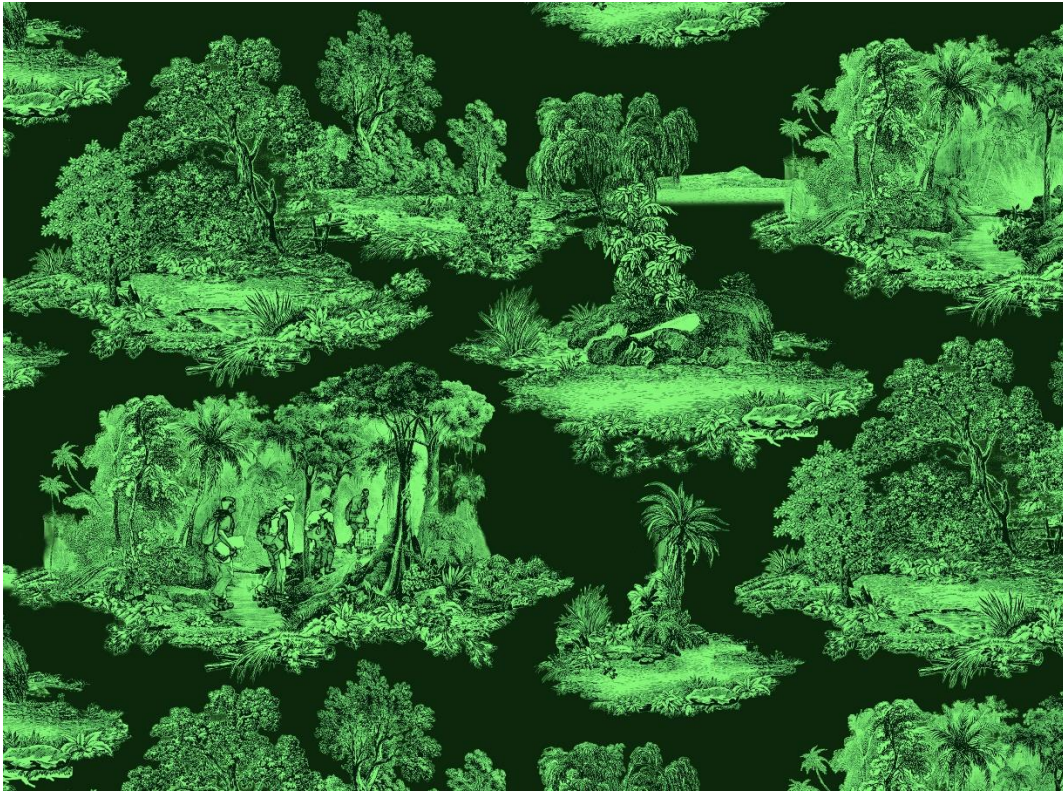


Above: Katherine Vetne, *My Pleasure II*, 2019; 12 melted lead crystal candelabras and candlesticks, silver nitrate, lacquer; approximately 46 ½ x 42 inches. Photo Credit: John Janca.

The exhibition features metal point drawings such as *Brides de Gala* and *Questionable Taste* (both 2019), that reference silk scarves produced and sold by Hermes, the historic French fashion house known for its bold and colorful designs. Vetne evokes Hermes’ familiar graphics in order to explore how popular brands create their own iconography, and how their products often reference familiar art historical genres and motifs, such as history painting and still life, to establish a lineage or relationship with a creative class. Vetne’s drawings depict anonymous hands touching or piercing the tousled scarves, a gesture that suggests the Christian parable of “Doubting Thomas,” the apostle who refused to believe in Jesus Christ’s resurrection until he could touch and pierce Christ’s wounds himself.

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The formal juxtaposition invites a deeper consideration of how faiths and consumer brands alike attract a devotional and even religious fervor by producing desire through aesthetics. By extension, Vetne's use of metal point – a Renaissance-era drawing technique in which a metal stylus, typically gold or silver, is used to deposit metal marks on a prepared surface – suggests yet another layer of transformation and value through her use of precious metals as a material for art making. Her most recent melted lead crystal sculptures, by comparison, center around the idea of an excessive collection – amassments of vases, candlesticks, and dinnerware – and the antiquity of certain cultural rituals (such as the once-ubiquitous dinner party with accompanying sets for entertaining), while also suggesting how these modes, while seemingly outdated, still inform our contemporary relationship to material cultures and their attendant social norms. *Whatever I See I Swallow* is generously supported by an Individual Artist Grant through the San Francisco Arts Commission.



Above: Brigitte Zieger, detail of *Eldorado Wallpaper*, 2013; animated video, 7 minutes (loop); edition of 5.

Vetne's exhibition is accompanied by a Media Room presentation of *Eldorado Wallpaper* (2013), an animated projected video by German-born artist Brigitte Zieger. Zieger's animation resembles an historical flocked wallpaper of a forest or jungle scene, rendered in neon green. Seemingly static

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at first glance, Zieger’s “wallpaper” quietly animates figures as they begin to emerge and disappear throughout the composition. Like Vetne, Zieger challenges the idea that decorative arts’ traditions are “neutral,” by exploring how these forms can be vehicles for larger commentaries on topics such as manifest destiny and environmental precarity.

Please join us for an opening reception on Saturday, September 7 from 4 – 6pm, with Katherine Vetne’s talk at 4:30pm.

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Catharine Clark | [cc@cclarkgallery.com](mailto:cc@cclarkgallery.com)

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Friday from 10:30am – 5:30pm | Saturday from 11am – 6pm

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### Artist Biographies



**KATHERINE VETNE** is a conceptual artist based in San Francisco, CA. She received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Boston University and a Master of Fine Arts from the San Francisco Art Institute. She is the recipient of SFAI’s Graduate Fellowship in Painting as well as the Allan B. Stone Award. Vetne has exhibited her work in galleries in Los Angeles, Boston and San Francisco.

In June 2018, Vetne’s work was featured in *We Tell Ourselves Stories...In Order to Live*, a group exhibition at Catharine Clark Gallery, alongside the work of Sophie Calle, Stephanie Syjuco, and Lenka Clayton.

In 2018, Vetne’s work was featured in *Heavy Metal – Women to Watch 2018* at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C. Her debut solo exhibition, *Whatever I See I Swallow*, is **generously supported by an Individual Artist Grant through the San Francisco Arts Commission**. In conjunction with the solo exhibit, Catharine Clark Gallery is proud to announce its representation of Katherine Vetne.

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Above: Katherine Vetne, *Questionable Taste*, 2019; casein, goldpoint, and graphite on chalk ground on panel; 40 x 90 inches. Photo Credit: John Janca.

### Upcoming Events and Exhibitions:

***Stephanie Syjuco: Rogue States*** | Solo survey exhibition

Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, MO

September 6 – December 29, 2019

For more information, visit: <https://camstl.org/exhibitions/stephanie-syjuco/>

**UNSEEN Amsterdam | Booth #32**

Featuring new photo works by Lenka Clayton, Jana Sophia Nolle, and Stephanie Syjuco

September 20 – 22, 2019

For more information, visit: <https://unseenamsterdam.com/>

**The Editions/Artists' Book Fair**

In collaboration with Mullowney Printing

Featuring new and recent editions by Alison Saar, Masami Teraoka, Josephine Taylor, Sandow Birk, Brad Brown and Lytle Shaw, Greg Niemeyer and Roger Antonsen

***How to Fall in Love in a Brothel*** | Ellen Sebastian Chang, Sunhui Chang, and Maya Gurantz

In conjunction with BOX BLUR and Dance Film SF

November 2 – December 21, 2019 For more information, visit:

<https://cclarkgallery.com/exhibitions/box-blur-2019-how-to-fall-in-love-in-a-brothel>

To make a tax-deductible donation: <https://donorbox.org/boxblur2019>



**BRIGITTE ZIEGER** is a German artist, who lives and works in Paris. She has participated in many international exhibitions: *Abracadabra* at the Tate Gallery London, *Prop Fiction* at White Columns, New York, *Line of Sight*, the MUDAC, Lausanne; *The Digital Hand*, National Museum of Fine Arts, Taipei; *Bang ! Bang !*, CCA Kunsthalle, Andratx, Mallorca; *Metamatic Reloaded*, Tinguely Museum, Basel; *Motopoétique*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Lyon; *Late Harvest*, Nevada Museum of Art, Reno; and *Call & Response*, MOCA Jacksonville. In an interview with Zieger (MOCA Jacksonville), she says of her practice, “It seems to me impossible to undertake any artistic endeavor without some political connection. The main interest for me is how history shapes our perception and conditions our view on gender and social stereotypes.”

Zieger’s work subtly undermines aesthetic forms and decorative patterns. She engages with a range of media: drawing, cut out, video, and sculpture. Though her works initially appear idyllic and harmonious, this perception falls apart upon closer examination—explosive charges lurk everywhere. Seemingly soft and seductive, the work’s ornamental charm becomes a site for critical disruption. Zieger aims to challenge injustices generated by a dominant-dominated system that governs the narratives of history and that has shaped contemporary societies. It follows that the representation of women plays an important role in her thinking and she draws from a specific iconography: women in resistance. Her female characters are armed. They take aim at the viewer. They are portraits of dangerous women and those actively wanted—rebels fighting against a system of exclusion. She portrays symbols of power and male authority (warrior iconography) with female gender stereotypes (eye-shadow, ornamentation) to re-examine the social, political, and historical discourse of images.

Zieger’s recent solo exhibits include *What if... ?*, Kunstverein Mannheim; *Other Scenes*, Void Art Centre, Londonderry; *Wallpapers*, John Young Museum of Art, Hawaii; and *Controversies*, Museum of Louviers. Her work is included in several major collections such as National collection of Art (FNAC), Paris, the MECA Bordeaux (FRAC Aquitaine), Deutsche Bank, London, Vehbi Koç Foundation, Istanbul, the Nevada Museum of Art and the Los Angeles County Museum (LACMA). The presentation of *Eldorado Wallpaper*, the video featured in the gallery’s media room, marks Zieger’s first exhibition/screening at Catharine Clark Gallery.

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