

NEWS RELEASE

Bruno David Gallery's Four New Exhibitions Open October 14

Heather Bennett

Photos of Gifts

Chris Kahler

Permutate

Leslie Laskey

*Cloud Images-
Eclipse*

Jill Downen

Window Women

Dates: October 14 – November 11, 2017

Location: Bruno David Gallery, 7513 Forsyth Boulevard, Clayton, MO 63105

Opening Reception & Meet the Artists: Saturday, October 14, 2017, from 6 to 9 pm

(SAINT LOUIS, MO — September 17, 2017) — Bruno David Gallery continues its 12th season with four new solo exhibitions. Photographer **Heather Bennett** presents a new series of photographs titled "Photos of Gifts." Painter **Chris Kahler** presents a series of recent works on paper titled "Permutate." 96 years old artist, **Leslie Laskey** presents an exhibition of 41 drawings titled "Cloud Images-Eclipse" and, sculptor **Jill Downen** continues to present an installation "Window Women" in the WINDOW ON FORSYTH (on view 24/7), a stack of sculptural blocks representing female breasts.

In her fourth solo exhibition with the gallery, photographer **Heather Bennett** presents a new series of photographs titled "Photos of Gifts."

Photographic images have traditionally depicted space, revealing people and objects, they are the stuff of illusion. They are also things. At the intersection of these identities is a kind of gooey vacillation as we look at and through a photographic image in contemporary culture. This work seems to depict exactly what the series title, *Photos of Gifts*, describes, however, objects are often wrapped



with photographic images complicating illusionistic space, as well as, obscuring object identities. Photographs as objects become part of the image construction, acting as things and simultaneously describing them. A seemingly fictitious space is created that belies and pronounces the archaic assumptive truth telling aspect of the photograph. Depth and flatness become one tactic, breaking in upon one another promiscuously. These images don't so much capture a past but hint at a transition. They are portraits of an object in a transient state, a brief state as the gift object, pampered and prepared, veiled and decorated, ready to be torn open and revealed. The ephemerality of the gift object, and of the photographic moment, in general, are collapsed and conflated with a wink.

This arguably absolute objecthood of the photograph is compounded in these works with the history of the woman as object so intricately outlined by her representation in the photographic/film medium. Women acting as objects for magazine advertisements are subtly transformed here to the focused subjects. Flattened, inextricable from the object portrait, their images are wrapped around that object and tied with a bow. The subject/object reversal of the female form gets a sea sickening treatment. The small act of wrapping a gift becomes a potent metaphor, exploding within its supposedly quiet, often assumed to be feminine place.

Barthes' 'that has been' moment which can never be again is treated with intention and without regret, without loss. The presence of the present implies duration which is essential to, and of course, contradictory to, ephemerality. Loss is horse-traded for simultaneity and contradiction leaving us to wonder not only what has been but if it ever was at all.

In conjunction with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery Publications will publish a catalogue of the artist's work with an exhibition history and bibliography.

Marking the artist's ninth solo exhibition with the gallery, **Chris Kahler** presents a series of recent works on paper titled "Permutate." The new series offers a unique body of work emerging from the questioning of linear possibilities and systematic process. The new work pertains to the concepts of destruction and regeneration, and the rhythm of emerging forms. Kahler's exploration of negative space, light, and intersecting planes has resulted in arresting juxtapositions of biomorphic and ephemeral forms. Similar to previous works he explores the "boundaries between physical and psychological time, between phenomena and the variable conceptual filters for understanding them." In conjunction with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery Publications will publish a catalogue of the artist's work with an exhibition history and bibliography.



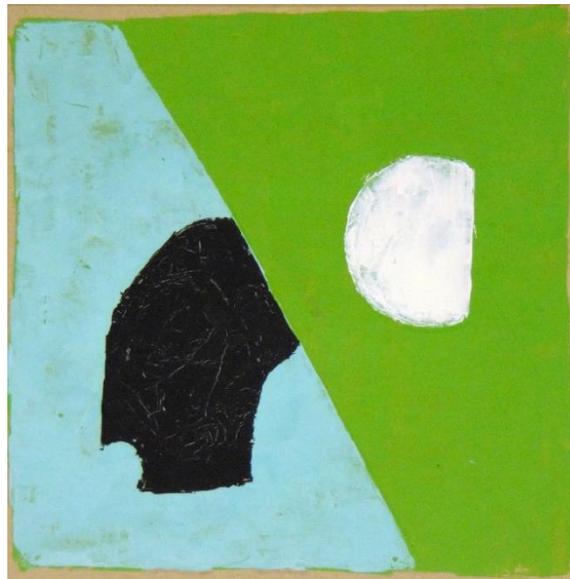
Chris Kahler is the Department Chair and Professor of Painting and Drawing at Eastern Illinois University. He received his B.F.A. at Ohio Wesleyan University and M.F.A. from Northwestern University, Chicago, IL. Kahler has been the subject of numerous one-person exhibitions at venues including the Richard Ross Art Museum, Delaware, OH (2014); Anita Wooten Gallery, Valencia College, Orlando, FL (2011); John P. Weatherhead Gallery, University of Saint Francis, Fort Wayne, IN (2009); Museum of Surgical Science, Chicago, IL (2002).

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In his eleventh solo show with the gallery, **Leslie Laskey** presents an exhibition of 41 drawings titled "Cloud Images-Eclipse." In conjunction with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery Publications will publish a catalogue of the artist's work with an exhibition history and bibliography.

Despite being 96 years old, Laskey's ability to create and inspire, as well as challenge and amuse become ever more apparent with each exhibition. In a recent interview with Bryan A. Hollerbach, Laskey said "I don't really like talking about the work – I think you have to, in a way, hear what you're seeing, and you have to see what you're hearing." Often described as passionate, demanding, insightful, magical, inspirational and, above all, creative, he is a force to be reckoned with, as illustrated in the 2012 film documentary "Forty-Seven Views of Leslie Laskey" by West-Coast-based filmmakers, David Wild and Lulu Gargiulo.

Seeing his last eleven exhibitions at the gallery, one gets the idea that for Leslie, art, work, and life are one in the same: "I don't think my art is different from my life; they're intertwined, inseparable. The way I cook, the way I paint, the way I read, and the music I listen to are all one in the same."(from article "The Art of Life, a Life in Art" published in the St. Louis Beacon) Whether he is talking about baking peaches, sharing his ideas for design, or reciting poetry, his passion and energy for life are contagious.



Born in Michigan in 1921, Laskey served in a combat unit in Europe and was among the troops that landed on Omaha Beach, early on D-Day, 1944. He studied at Indiana University and at the Institute of Design in Chicago (now the Illinois Institute of Technology) with founder and American Bauhaus pioneer Lászlò Moholy-Nagy. Currently, he divides his time between St. Louis and Manistee, Michigan and is a Professor Emeritus of Architecture at the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis.

Marking the artist's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery, **Jill Downen** presents in the WINDOW ON FORSYTH (on view 24/7), a stack of sculptural blocks representing female breasts that command attention. This exhibition opened September 2 and runs through November 11, 2017.

Stacked in neat rows, subtle nuance reveals that each is uniquely shaped, a result of the artist's additive and subtractive processes, layering plaster and sanding surfaces to achieve feminine curves. Presented at street level, is this a nod to Amsterdam's women in windows, fecundity available for consumption? Or is this an homage to Artemis, the ancient Greek diva of Ephesus, with a cultural stream of commerce flowing from the goddess image? Downen's work addresses such dialogue in relation to contemporary situations such as women's marches and a nasty women arsenal in pursuit of equality.



Jill Downen has received numerous awards including the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, the MacDowell Colony National Endowment for the Arts residency, and Cité International des Arts Residency in Paris. She has created site specific installations for museums such as American University Museum in Washington DC, the Oklahoma City Museum of Art, and the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis Great Rivers Biennial and its 10th Anniversary exhibition, Place is the Space. Downen has been invited to lecture about her work extensively, including the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. and the Luce Irigaray Circle Philosophy Conference in New York. Her art has been reviewed in publications including *Art in America*, *Sculpture Magazine*, *Art Papers*, *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *The New York Times* and *Bad at Sports*. She holds a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute and an MFA as a Danforth Scholar from Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts - Washington University in St. Louis. Jill Downen is an assistant professor of sculpture at the Kansas City Art Institute.

For images and additional information, please contact the gallery at info@brunodavidgallery.com. Heather Bennett, Jill Downen, Chris Kahler, Leslie Laskey, and Bruno L. David are available for interviews.

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Up-coming exhibition
Andréa Stanislav
"Cosmist Reconstruction"
November 18, 2017 – January 20, 2018



Bruno David Gallery
Public Hours: Wednesday through Saturday
11:00 am – 6:00 pm
Also open by appointment
Email: info@brunodavidgallery.com
Website: brunodavidgallery.com
Tel: 1.314.696.2377

ABOUT THE BRUNO DAVID GALLERY & BRUNO DAVID PROJECTS

Founded in 1983 in New York City, Bruno David Gallery and Bruno David Projects has been a leading art gallery since its establishment in Saint Louis in 2005. Bruno David represents some of the most innovative artists practicing in Saint Louis, along with artists of international reputation.

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Bruno David Gallery was first established by Bruno David in New York City (1983) and later in St. Louis (2005).

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TWO LOCATIONS

BRUNO DAVID GALLERY

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