

FORT GANSEVOORT



Laurel Shear

Daydreaming in my Nightmare

Opening On:

Wednesday, March 7, 6 – 8 PM

March 7 – April 21, 2018

Laurel Shear is a painter unafraid of pink and all that the color implies. Furious fuchsias and glimmering blushes are a signature of her oeuvre. At nearly six-feet tall, the former competitive cheerleader uses her work to issue a confrontational— though deeply personal— challenge to the society that created such a girl.

Shear's feminism is unusual in that she does not reject the anemic images and commodity-driven dreams that girls in American culture are raised on. Instead she nourishes them. Giving voice to *Forced Maternity* and *All The Unmarried Girls*, Shear subtly shifts the focus to culturally unbecoming aspects of womanhood: need, pain, flesh and loss.

Bed sheets are a reoccurring source of imagery for Shear. Her canvases reflect this, built to the scale of a California king-size bed. In *Beds Burning*, there is a recuperative staining of reputations conveyed through bold moody tones built up around a central focal point. The title implies finality. The match is lit and all the beds past will soon become ash.

Her process begins with photography. Minute details of the folds in her grandmother's slip or the electric lights of a strip club become photo-collages intricately pieced together to provide a structure for the impossible dreamscapes. A series of watercolors included in the show are painted with make-up, taking her source material for a literal turn. In these works on paper, the negative space suggests three-dimensional forms that have been expurgated from our view. Here, as in the paintings, the interplay of depth and superficiality is at the heart of Shear's practice.

In *Crystal Eclipse Moon Water*, Shear conjures an epic battle between the forces of femininity and that which attempts to obfuscate them. The translucent cotton candy colored form is both ground and figure; suggesting not only that the eclipsing blue-green darkness is candy's shadow, but also her hollow wake after a bloody and beautiful dream, the remnants of which make up the center third of the painting. Scratching at the girl within, *Crystal Eclipse Moon Water* confirms the fruits and darkneses that Shear's pink possesses.

Laurel Shear is originally from Marin County, California. Shear is currently living and working in the Bay Area. She earned her MFA from The University of Texas at Austin, in 2015. Shear graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from San Francisco State University. She has studied at the Studio Art Center International in Florence, Italy, and at the Queensland College of Art in Brisbane, Australia. Shear won the Graduate School Named Endowed Fellowship, University of Texas at Austin (2014) and the Martin Wong Scholarship, San Francisco State University (2008). She has been awarded fellowships to study at Tyler School of Art at Temple University and Ox-Bow School of Art in Saugatuck, Michigan. Fort Gansevoort presented a solo booth of Laurel Shear at Untitled, San Francisco, 2018.