

## kasia kay art projects



Megan Euker  
HAE Golden Gloves 1939, 2016  
Acrylic on Canvas, 72" h x 40.5" w



Zoe Buckman  
She dwells with beauty, 2018  
Boxing gloves, vintage wedding dress



Katya Bankowsky and Michele Lamy  
Still from *Battle Royale* video, 2016

## **Kasia Kay Art Projects Announces *On Guard* Group Exhibition**

Kasia Kay Art Projects is pleased to present *On Guard*, a group exhibition curated by Kasia Kay, to be on view at Matthew Rachman Gallery from November 2 – December 2, 2018.

The opening reception for *On Guard* takes place on Friday, November 2, 6-9PM.

Matthew Rachman is located at 1659 W. Chicago Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Gallery Hours are Tuesday – Sunday 11-6 pm. For information contact 773.245.3182 or [info@matthewrachman.com](mailto:info@matthewrachman.com).

### **About *On Guard***

*On Guard* was inspired by "Life Doesn't Frighten Me," a book that combines a poem by renowned author and activist Maya Angelou with illustrations by artist Jean-Michel Basquiat. Angelou's simple and empowering sentences, accompanied by the visually strong images of Basquiat's works, deliver the overall message that people should go on in their lives without fears. *On Guard* is meant to be a reminder of the courage within all of us and to empower viewers to fight for their rights on both personal and collective levels.

The exhibition brings together a group of contemporary artists exploring the sport of boxing in relation to the nature of life that always keeps us on our feet and on guard. Boxing is a performance business and, in this sense, it easily translates to an exhibition. The sport once represented masculine destructivity, but nowadays it is one of femme empowerment and self-defense.

While *On Guard* centers on female-identifying artists, the multifaceted components of their identities and practice are to be present in the exhibition as well. With a multisensory experience that features multidisciplinary works, the show examines not only courage and fears, strength and vulnerability, but also notions of gender equality, safety and violence, as well as the sport's poetic contradictions, all through traditional and non-traditional depictions of boxing-related imagery.

*On Guard* will travel to NYC in the spring of 2019.

### **About the Artists**

The artists participating in *On Guard* include **Katya Bankowsky with Maya Angelou, and Katya Bankowsky with Michele Lamy, French fashion icon, designer and creator of Lamyland, Zoë Buckman, Megan Euker, Kat Kay, Cheryl Pope, and Marcela E. Torres.**

**Katya Bankowsky** is a New York-based director, whose work includes the award-winning movie, "Shadow Boxers," and many art and music videos. Two of her short films are featured in *On Guard*. "Battle Royale" is an on-going short film collaboration between Bankowsky and French fashion icon **Michele Lamy** about their mutual obsession with boxing and its poetic contradictions. Katya writes, directs and co-stars with Lamy.

"Amazement Awaits" is a poem written and performed by **Maya Angelou** at the request of the US Olympic Committee. Bankowsky filmed Angelou reciting the poem in her Harlem brownstone, then intercut it with archival Olympic footage. The film was projected in the Olympic Pavilion during the Beijing Olympics as an inspiration for the

young athletes.

**Zoë Buckman** is a renowned mixed media artist whose work is deeply rooted in activism aiming to take down historical, systematic oppression of women. Her work toes the line between masculine and feminine, industrial and handmade, craft and “high” art, personal and collective, explosive and restrained. Buckman aims to make her work accessible to all in order to make space for a dialogue on the topic of gender equality and the violence against women. She has exhibited across the country and internationally, in both solo and group shows. *On Guard* features three of her pieces, which juxtapose traditionally effeminate mediums and imagery (i.e. pearls, lace and silk) with brutal boxing glove forms.

**Megan Euker** explores the narratives and histories that objects hold. She questions how changing materials and fabrication methods alters meaning. With the final form becoming wood, cast metal sculptures and printed words, she is going after that which is considered golden, precious, impermanent and irreplaceable as in the athlete’s body, accessories and personal stories. Her works include sculptures and a nonfiction book of stories, relics and images linked through the sport of boxing. Some examples include 3D-scanned and CNC (computer-numerical-control) routed wood sculptures based on HAE’s boxing shoes from the prestigious 1939 Golden Gloves competition. Several of her sculptures and paintings are exhibited in *On Guard*.

**Marcela Torres** is a social strategist, bringing into action performance, objects, workshops and sound installation. Torres pairs alternative learning methods with martial arts, creating a platform for the audience to witness a true representation of conflict. Torres has performed at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Three Walls Gallery, Performances is Alive: Miami Art Week, Detroit’s Fringe Festival, New York City’s Itinerant Festival and Virtual International Exchange in Boston. Torres has

exhibited work at the Flatlands Gallery in Houston Texas, Fosdick Nelson Gallery at Alfred University, Acre Gallery in Chicago and Green Gallery at Yale School of Art. In *On Guard*, Torres exhibits photography and performs "Agentic Mode," deconstructing martial art techniques while experimenting with sound. Torres's motions build an audial symphony as a means to represent the complicated mindspace of violence, the fine line of victim, aggressor, and retaliation.

**Kat (Kasia) Kay** works in bronze, as well as ceramics and paper. Within each medium, her stylistic approaches are very different, though there are common themes across all of them. She is influenced by daily life, literature, history, culture and introspection. She challenges conventional methods in the art world both as an artist and an art curator, through interdisciplinary methods and exhibitions in public spaces. In *On Guard*, she exhibits a sculpture of a bronze boxing glove titled #LDFM that is paired with a history-filled vintage glove --- the original for the cast. The work reflects on Kay's life journey, as well as on the "Life Doesn't Frighten Me" book, a direct inspiration for her curation of *On Guard*.

**Cheryl Pope** is a Chicago-raised artist who is locally and globally represented. She is an interdisciplinary visual artist whose work questions and responds to issues of identity as it relates to the individual and the community, specifically regarding race, gender, class, history, power and place. Her practice emerges from the act and politics of listening, with many of her works incorporating spoken word. The majority of her work relates to boxing, basketball and sports culture. Pope's "Heavyweight" painting-installation is featured in *On Guard*.

**Kasia Kay Art Projects** presents curatorial projects and pop-up shows in collaboration with art and cultural partners while exposing both local and international artists at various stages of their careers. Founder and curator Kasia Kay was a respected gallerist and art dealer prior to focusing on curatorial projects. She has worked with an

international clientele and participated in renowned international art fairs since 2006. Interested in eliminating a conventional experience from the gallery space, she has curated and produced exhibition projects and site-specific installations at venues in Chicago, Miami and New York.

For information or images visit [www.kasiakayartprojects.co](http://www.kasiakayartprojects.co) or contact Kasia Kay at 312-543-6783.