

rachel uffner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Strauss Bourque-LaFrance: *post paintings*

April 3 – May 15, 2016

Opening Reception: Sunday, April 3, 2016, 6 – 8 pm

At first glance, *post paintings* might seem like an incredibly pretentious name for an exhibition—the kind you roll your eyes at and think, “Jesus, *another* show about painting.” Well, I’d say it’s not really what you think. Like any decent show about the medium, Strauss’ title is kind of a gag. It’s both about painting and everything painting is not—the catch being the two are always dialectically tethered, in good, postmodern fashion (Derrida in “The Parergon”: “The incomprehensibility of [a] border”). Note how there’s no dash between *post* and *painting*, because these “paintings” are literally posts (so many tongues and cheeks here). They’re made of 2” x 2” basswood sections, stacked and latticed in varying configurations. They’re similar to the basswood pieces in his T293 show, *USA Objects*, and may seem rather *dissimilar* from his earlier Rachel Uffner outing, with its shiny, laminate surfaces and striped carpeting. But each offers a different, material way to “arrange” a painting, whatever painting means.

In *post paintings*, many of Strauss’ wood strips are also wrapped in pages of the *New York Post*—another nod to posts here—but it’s not so apparent. The paper has been scribbled over in acrylic marker, oil stick, and wood stain, and thus—to me at least—looks rather abstract expressionist, like something out of *Mad Men*—Helen Frankenthaler or Cy Twombly, if they only painted their frames, bones making a body. Is it without organs? They don’t seem to follow any order. The body is everywhere here, though it’s only elliptically addressed. In the collaged groupings, the *Post*’s pages have been almost entirely covered in various shades of color, save for bits of clothes, hands, torsos, and garbled headlines left exposed—we don’t know whose or which, really. It doesn’t matter. It’s all vaguely sexual and homoerotic, these anonymous bodies and hands, caught in the act of reaching or touching.

With its references to craft, collage and construction—model boats, buoys, things like that—*post paintings* is, if anything very Americana. Strauss grew up in rural Maine after all, surrounded by them. His father painted signs and made furniture for a living, and his mother—when she wasn’t lighting up—made *trompe-l’œil* paintings of things like Grecian vases. So painting is in Strauss’ very fiber, even if he doesn’t necessarily want it to be, in the brush-and-paint sense. But it’s more painting-as-collage, or painting-as-sculpture, or painting-in-the-expanded-field (hey Rosalind Krauss), or image-as-object, object-as-symbol. The iterations are endless and fluid. As I’m writing this, who knows what the show will actually become once he gets in the space, as the space can change everything on a dime. But what does it matter, when everything is, in a way, so interchangeable?

Text by David Everitt Howe, 2016

Strauss Bourque-LaFrance b. 1983, lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. This is his second solo show at Rachel Uffner Gallery. Recent exhibitions include a solo exhibition at T293, Rome, IT, *Dance and Process*, The Kitchen, New York, NY, *A Peg to Hang in On*, White Flag Projects, St. Louis, MO, and a two-person exhibition at Exo, Exo in Paris, FR. He has also been included in exhibitions at ICA, Philadelphia, PA and SculptureCenter, Long Island City, NY, among many others. He received his BFA from Hampshire College, Amherst, MA; and his MFA from the Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia, PA.

Image:

Strauss Bourque-LaFrance, *Bonnet for the Best Shaker*, 2016, basswood, stain, acrylic, oil stick, wax, New York Post, 34 x 20 x 2 inches (86.4 x 50.8 x 5.1 cm)

Please call (212) 274-0064 or email info@racheluffnergallery.com for more information.



Rachel Uffner Gallery
170 Suffolk Street
New York, NY 10002

+1 212 274 0064
info@racheluffnergallery.com
racheluffnergallery.com