

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pioneer Lust

July 22 – September 10, 2016

Opening reception: Friday, July 22, 6–8 pm

Artist's talk at 7 pm

Lora Reynolds is pleased to announce *Pioneer Lust*, a group show of painting, sculpture, drawing, and photography. The exhibition includes work by Noriko Ambe, Colby Bird, Ben Durham, Tony Feher, Shannon Finley, Donald Moffett, Arlene Shechet, and Jim Torok.

Ben Durham draws mugshots of friends and classmates from childhood, but rather than cross-hatching or shading, the large drawings are comprised entirely of handwritten text. Durham finds these source images while looking for familiar faces and names in the daily arrest records from his hometown. He layers text on top of itself, rendering much of it unreadable, to create a photorealistic image on thick, heavily textured paper he makes by hand. Relying on his own fragmented memories and the information from the public record, the text is Durham's attempt to understand and record his subject's story. The drawings, and the incomplete narratives they present, are meditations on the myriad factors that shape a life and influence the way we view those around us. The situations we find ourselves in and the decisions we make—the diversity of our experiences—are simultaneously what separates us as individuals and binds us together.

Durham is also presenting work from a new series that features chain-link fencing embedded within cast paper. Chain-link fence is designed to be predominantly invisible, but its widespread use in urban areas is profoundly felt. Sourced from his surrounding community, Durham repurposes the steel fences as markers of both our heavily demarcated spaces and the people they obstruct.

Shannon Finley's iridescent paintings of interlocking circles or triangles call to mind the stained glass of centuries past—but filtered through the digital, sharp, precise language of computers. Finley begins each composition with imaging software, transfers it to canvas, and drags paint into form with custom-made palette knives. The paintings seem to glow, as the first layer of acrylic (often a bright pink) thrums to the surface through dozens of subsequent thin layers of paint. A final layer of clear gel gives the artworks a smooth, translucent shine reminiscent of sheet metal or plastic. With titles like *Hypnosis*, *Googol*, and *Broadcast*, the work seems to examine contemporary modes of communication, idolatry, and transcendence and the increasingly blurred lines between man and machine.

Jim Torok makes two types of paintings: small, realistic portraits of family, friends, or public figures, and looser cartoon drawings (sometimes with text, sometimes with stick figures) that explore his thoughts, feelings, and daily life. His contributions to this show include a portrait of Donald Trump (hazy from sanding down the finished likeness) and a crudely drawn American flag (white with black lines and faint hints of a red and blue underpainting). Torok's newest work reflects the current political climate and recent news events—rising racial tensions, gun violence, protests of police brutality, terrorist attacks, and the polarizing 2016 presidential race.

Ben Durham, born in 1982 in Kentucky, lives and works in Virginia. He has exhibited at the 21c Museum (Louisville), FLAG Art Foundation (New York), and National Portrait Gallery (Washington DC). His work is included in the collections of the Hammer Museum (Los Angeles), Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (Richmond), and Whitney Museum of American Art (New York).

Shannon Finley, born in 1974 in Ontario, lives and works in Berlin. He has exhibited at the Khyber Centre for the Arts (Halifax), Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art (Berlin), Kunsthalle Athena (Greece), Museum für Konkrete Kunst (Germany), Prague Biennale (Czech Republic), and Yokohama Museum of Art (Japan). This November Finley will mount his first solo exhibition at Lora Reynolds Gallery.

Jim Torok, born in 1954 in Indiana, lives and works in Brooklyn and upstate New York. He has exhibited at the Denver Art Museum, National Portrait Gallery (Washington DC), OMI International Arts Center (New York), Taubman Museum of Art (Virginia), and Ulrich Museum of Art (Kansas). His work is included in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) and Museum of Modern Art (New York).