

LAUNCH

Still

Organized by Rough Play Collective

Nine Artists pay homage to the tradition of the still life genre within the context of contemporary practices during a global pandemic and cultural upheaval

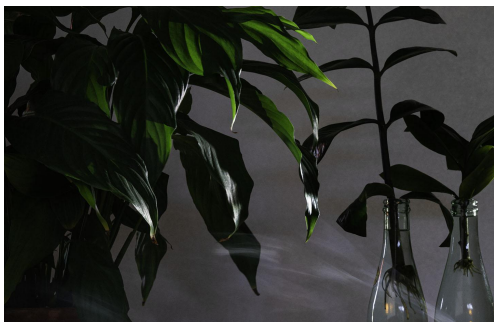
Saturday, April 2nd – April 30, 2022
Opening Reception: Saturday, April 2, from 4-7pm
Gallery hours: Thursday – Saturday, 12 – 6pm

Cole Case, Elmer Guevara, Janna Ireland, Ben Jackel, Dana Maiden, Kaoru Mansour,
Anthony Miserendino, Juliana Rico and Emily Sudd

(Los Angeles) LAUNCH Gallery is proud to present “Still”, a group exhibition of eight artists who have created their own still lifes based on the various definitions of the word “still”. The exhibition organized by **Rough Play Collective** opens April 2, 2022 with a reception from 4-7 PM at Launch Gallery, 170 S La Brea Avenue, Los Angeles. The interpretation of **Still** by this diverse group of artists is informed by the time spent confined, secluded, and surrounded daily by the same objects; the exhibition design further reflects quiet isolation and expanded personal space through social distancing.

The still life genre, prevalent in the 17th century with “memento mori”, signified the impermanence of human life and the futility of pleasure and vanity. This style of painting commonly used objects as metaphors for human mortality and the fragility of life. Later, modern artists such as Paul Cezanne and cubist painters used still life compositions as formal experiments. By the 1960’s, artists inspired by the “found object”, such as Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns, and Roy Lichtenstein, again reinterpreted the meaning of the still life by linking it to popular culture. Though the tone and materials differ, Covid enforced stillness has made way for contemporary artists to again speak to the fragility of life through the symbolism of inanimate objects.

Cole Case received his BA in Literature At Stanford University, 1982 and his MFA in Fine Art/Painting from Art Center College of Design, 1999. This is a painting of the last pair of shoes my father owned before he died in 2019. I helped him pick them out and order them online, he wanted something fun and comfortable to wear as by that time he was confined to a wheelchair. All my paintings are about memory, mortality and personal history. *Last Shoes* is part of a larger ongoing series about the declining health and death of my parents and confronting my own not-that-far-away-anymore destiny. Like many of my paintings, it is based on art historical precedents - in this case, Van Gogh's series of shoe paintings and Robert Ryman's abstractions which possess their own kind of non-objective stillness".



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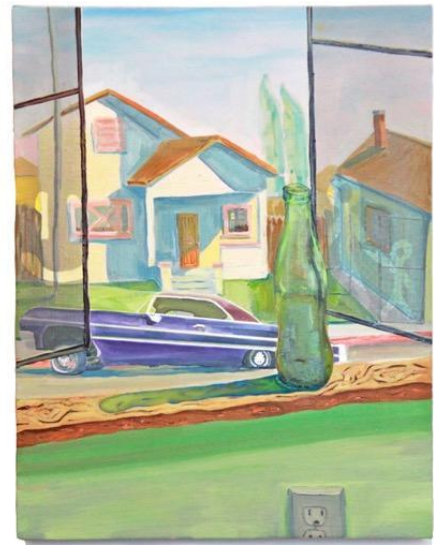
Juliana Rico is an award winning, nationally showcased, queer, Latinx, visual artist, educator, consultant and academic. She works primarily in photography and video around topics of identity. She earned her BFA in Photography from San Jose State University and MFA in Creative Photography from California State University Fullerton. Identity and representation are themes that are at the core of her art practice.

Juliana Rico, *Rituals*, 2020

Ben Jackel received his BFA from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 2000. He then moved to Los Angeles, receiving his MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles. He has exhibited widely and is represented by LA Louver. He is primarily interested in creating handmade objects that deal with the subject and history of war. His porcelain discarded mask series serves as a permanent reminder of the loss and suffering from the pandemic.

Elmer Guevara was born and raised in Los Angeles and is currently working bicoastally in New York City. In the 1980s, his parents fled a war-torn El Salvador finding refuge in the City of Angels. In 2017, he received a BFA in Drawing and Painting from Cal State University Long Beach and is currently an MFA candidate at Hunter College in New York City. His work reflects on his upbringing and the hybridity of cultures. He depicts observations from his own and neighboring immigrant families, who dealt with issues of marginalization and inequality.

Janna Ireland is a multidisciplinary artist with a focus on photography. She was born in Philadelphia, but has chosen Los Angeles as her home. She holds an MFA from the UCLA Department of Art and a BFA from the Department of Photography and Imaging at NYU. She is best known for her series of photographs of buildings designed by African-American architect, Paul R. Williams.



Elmer Guevara, *Spread Eagle*, 2022

Anthony Miserendino earned an MFA from UCLA in 2014 and a BFA from Cooper Union in 2007. He was nominated for the Dedalus Foundation MFA Fellowship in Painting and Sculpture, was a fellow at the La

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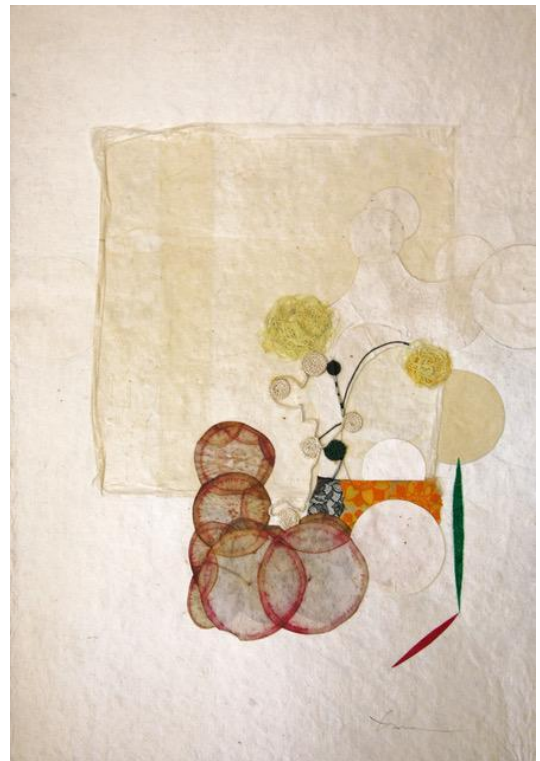
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Napoule Art Foundation Residency, France, and recently participated in the Villa Lena Foundation Artist Residency, Italy. His work explores how environment and identity shape each other.

Dana Maiden is a Minnesota native with a BA in Visual Art and Art History from Columbia University, NY. She moved to California where she graduated from Claremont University's MFA program. She works in the expanded fields of photography, sculpture and video; her works combine sculpture and video to activate some of the perceptual constructions unique to photography.

Emily Sudd is a multimedia artist working primarily in ceramic sculpture. Her work engages in conversation with still life, narrative, and abstract painting; post minimalist sculpture; hierarchies of materials and taste; and the role of the kitsch object. Sudd lives and works in Los Angeles, CA, and holds an MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Her unique process transforms collectible kitsch ceramic objects and functional ware into fine art sculptures.

Kaoru Mansour is a native of Japan working as a painter in Los Angeles. She moved to California in 1986 and studied at Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles 1987-1989 and has been working as a freelance painter in Los Angeles over 27 years. She describes her artistic expression and process as endeavoring to transcribe who she is.



Kaoru Mansour, *Sunday Roasted Tomatoes*. 2021

Rough Play Collective is a Los Angeles curatorial group of women artists, born out of a dialogue on the increasing demand in contemporary art for the artist to combine artistic practice with academic research. Collectively, the members of this group – Elizabeth Tinglof, Ashley Hagen, Emily Sudd, Tessa

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Tinglof and Emily Wiseman—have been involved in a multitude of exhibitions in curatorial, administrative, and academic capacities, as well as participating as exhibiting artists.

LAUNCH LA believes exposure to the arts enhances quality of life and strengthens community for all through the shared appreciation of creative expression in all its forms and hybrids. LAUNCH LA is passionate about providing all artists regardless of race, color, creed or sexual orientation with quality opportunities to present themselves and their creations that reflect our times to a curious and enthusiastic audience at important happenings throughout Los Angeles.

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