

PETRA CORTRIGHT AND ED FORNIELES
« FAMILY STATE OF MIND »

Exhibition from May 23th to June 28th, 2014
Opening on Thursday May 22th, 6 – 9 pm



Valentin is pleased to present FAMILY STATE OF MIND, an exhibition featuring work by Petra Cortright and Ed Fornieles. The exhibition places the family as its central theme in relation to both artists' studio practice at the moment. Cortright will exhibit paintings depicting the interior architecture of a home through symbols and objects composed in a manner resembling the home building techniques in the Japanese Tamagotchi-esque mobile app MEGU. Fornieles will present sculptures that use materials commonly seen on Pinterest and Etsy as detritus for a series of resin based, contemporary home decoration tumbleweed-Katamari.

FAMILY STATE OF MIND is an exhibition that proposes the family and the home as a sanctified place, which is simulated, imitated and fed back to its mediated representation. The family, the home and its televised representation are the site of construction and role-play of social norms. Any threat to the idea of the family could be seen as a form of terrorism. What constitutes a family or healthy upbringing is made familiar to the masses through its television depiction. Modern family, Married with Children, The Simpsons, Roseanne, the family unit and its underlying imperfections is a formula which gets updated over time and produces hilarious results season after season. As television has morphed into social applications, how do you deal with the fact that Martha Stewart has a better Twitter than you?

When you see a friend's mom, dad, sister, brother, or cousin comment on their post, it's a dose of reality. The family marks a rupture in the stream, a sense of the real and realness within the realm of the constructed coolness of friends. Unless it is narrated historically, the family is sometimes treated as something that exists outside of and separate from the image and identity of the contemporary artist. When the artist revisits the family structure as alien, it is a perversion. It's like going back to the place where you grew up and just because you were away and you think you've changed everything looks fucked up and weird; like that twee scene in Garden State when Zach Braff's shirt matches the bathroom wallpaper. The individual starts to feel and act like an outsider to the landscape that informed her interior; the home and the family appear to be abstract inescapable entities.

Petra Cortright explores the texture and interior design of her Martha Stewart Feng Shui'ed studio. Her paintings depict the site of the family, the home. Cortright's version of home is a Hallmark frozen screensaver of all the things you like that make you feel at home perfectly arranged in your dream house, in your dream studio. Each composition aspires to say, "It's a good thing." Ed Fornieles has been slipping printed flyers in mailboxes in an attempt to recruit writers for personal accounts of their family life. So far it's worked and the mothers have responded. To quote Ed, "Then the mothers led me to the children." His recent sculptural works appear as though there is a grandma in resident at his studio; they are having a really fun time together, introducing each other to their favorite music.

Petra Cortright (born 1986, Santa Barbara) lives and works in Los Angeles. Recent solo exhibitions including Petra Cortright, Carl Kostyál, Stockholm (2014), ASMR, Showroom MAMA, Rotterdam (2014), *x*x BLank BLANK bLANK • • ° , Steve Turner Contemporary, Los Angeles (2013), VICKY DEEP IN SPRING VALLEY, Club Midnight, Berlin (2013), SO WET, Preteen Gallery, Mexico City (2011). Recent group exhibitions include the Biennale de Lyon (2013), the San Jose Biennial (2010), and at the Internet Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2009). Cortright published an e-book in 2012, HELL_TREE, with Badlands Unlimited, which was profiled by Bruce Sterling in Artforum.

Ed Fornieles (born 1983, Petersfield) lives and works in Los Angeles. Recent solo exhibitions include Despicable Me 2, Mihai Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles (2013), The Dreamy Awards, Park Nights, Serpentine Gallery, London (2012), Characterdate, Frieze Frame, Frieze London (2012) and Happy Days in Basel, Theater Basel (2012). Recent performances include New York New York Happy Happy (NY NY HP HP) (2013) Rhizome, New Museum, New York (2013) and Pool Party Plays Itself, MOCAtv, Los Angeles (2013). He also participated in Meanwhile... Suddenly, and Then, the 12th Biennale de Lyon (2013).

Text by Lucy Chinen