

Mickalene Thomas

Tête de Femme

June 26-August 8, 2014

540 West 26th Street, New York, NY

#tetedefemme

Opening Reception: Thursday, June 26, 2014, 6-8pm



Mickalene Thomas, *Carla*, 2014. Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York and Hong Kong.

New York, NY, June 19, 2014—Lehmann Maupin is delighted to debut *Tête de Femme*, a new body of work by artist Mickalene Thomas. In her fourth solo exhibition with the gallery, Thomas explores the intricacies of female beauty through painting and collage, focusing on how artifice serves both to mask and reveal the individual essence of her subjects. The artist will be present for an opening reception on Thursday, June 26 from 6 to 8PM.

Throughout much of her career, Thomas has drawn from art history with particular interest in classical portraiture, constructed interiors, and iconic representations of the female form. References to Édouard Manet, Henri Matisse, Romare Bearden and Gustave Courbet may be found throughout her oeuvre. In *Tête de Femme* (translated as “head of a woman”), Thomas looks to early 20th-century Cubism and contemporary Pop references, fragmenting and reducing portraiture to its most formal and geometric elements to create larger-than-life portraits of her models.

While the artist’s earlier works focused on classical depictions of the female form, primarily using powerful black women as the subjects, *Tête de Femme* more boldly conceptualizes female faces from collaged geometric cutouts. She relies on these shapes in the absence of glamorized female bodies placed in the highly conceptualized environments of her previous work. The series demonstrates the artist’s interplay of line, form, and

material, punctuated with an increased use of color. With an affinity for rhinestones and glitter, Thomas utilizes these materials in addition to introducing screen-printing to her practice, giving her paintings a new dimensionality.

In addition to her exhibition at Lehmann Maupin, Thomas will be exhibiting this year at George Eastman House, Rochester, NY from June 20 to October 19 and L’Ecole des Beaux Arts de Monaco, Monaco from July 4 to August 31. She has also been commissioned to create a special mural for the US Embassy in Dakar, Senegal.

About Mickalene Thomas

Mickalene Thomas earned her MFA at the Yale University School of Art in 2002. From 2000 to 2003, the artist participated in a residency at the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York and in 2011, a residency at the Versailles Foundation Munn Artists Program, Giverny, France. Thomas has been included in a number of important solo and group exhibitions worldwide, including *Mickalene Thomas: Origin of the Universe*, Brooklyn Museum, New

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York (2012-13) and Santa Monica Museum of Art (2012); *Mickalene Thomas*, The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA (2012); *Mama Bush: One of a Kind Two*; The Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan (2011); *30 Americans*, the Corcoran Gallery in Washington D.C. (2011); *American Now*, National Portrait Gallery, Washington D.C. (2010); and *Something You Can Feel*, La Conservera Contemporary Art Centre, Ceuti, Spain (2009). Thomas's work is part of significant public collections including The Museum of Modern Art, Brooklyn Museum, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Whitney Museum of American Art, and Studio Museum of Harlem in New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Art Institute of Chicago, and Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Japan, among others. She has been awarded multiple prizes and grants, including the Brooklyn Museum Asher B. Durand Award (2012), Timerhi Award for Leadership in the Arts (2010), Joan Mitchell Grant and Pratt Institute Alumni Achievement Award (both 2009), and Rema Hort Mann Grant (2007). The artist lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

For more information on Mickalene Thomas, please contact Marta de Movellan at Lehmann Maupin on +1 212 255 2923 or visit www.lehmannmaupin.com.

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