

ALTMAN SIEGEL

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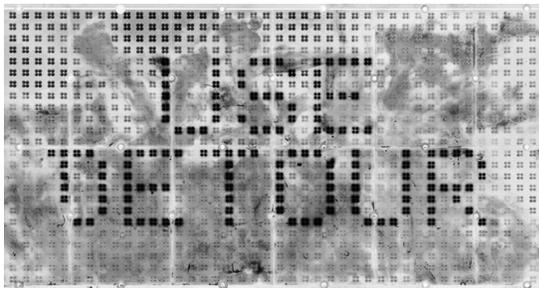
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SFC&G

San Francisco Cottages and Gardens

“Gallerist Claudia Altman Siegel Curates
Contemporary’s Rising Stars,” by Alisa Carroll
October 2015



Shannon Ebner

Scholarship, market savvy and a grounded attitude: these personal qualities, along with an outstanding roster of emerging talent, have made Claudia Altman Siegel one of San Francisco’s leading next-generation art dealers. Since founding her eponymous gallery, [Altman Siegel](#), at 49 Geary in 2009, she has created inspired programs to raise awareness of work by contemporary artists like Trevor Paglen, Sara VanDerBeek and Garth Weiser throughout the Bay Area and beyond. And though not one to court the spotlight, with her roster showing globally and a schedule of thoughtful exhibitions slated for the coming year, all eyes are on Altman Siegel.

You spent 10 years at the visionary Luhring Augustine Gallery in New York working on projects by artists like Rachel Whiteread, Albert Oehlen and Christopher Wool. How did your tenure there inform your vision for your own space?

Along the way, I learned how to do all aspects of gallery work, from art handling to sales to putting together exhibitions. I watched the artists with whom I was working become more and more established, both in the scope of their exhibitions and in the strengths of their markets. At the same time, many of my friends and peers, who were much younger than the artists we represented, were starting to develop their practices and careers as artists, but, I wasn’t able to work with them in the context of Luhring Augustine’s established

program. So when I left, I jumped on the opportunity to work with them in my own gallery, and these artists made up the initial roster of Altman Siegel’s program: Sara VanDerBeek, Matt Keegan, Garth Weiser, Trevor Paglen and Shannon Ebner.

Which of your artists have particularly exciting things on the forefront?

All of my artists are really busy, which is exciting. Sara VanDerBeek just finished up solo shows at the Baltimore Museum of Art; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland; and the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Shannon Ebner and Matt Keegan are currently in the show “Storylines” at the Guggenheim. Emily Wardill is working on a new film that will tour several museums in Europe, and Trevor Paglen is working on an extremely exciting and unprecedented public art project with the Nevada Museum of Art.



Claudia Altman Siegel, portrait by Will Rogan

Your current show, “Standing and Hanging,” features work by five iconic 20th-century sculptors.

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How does it contextualize your program of emerging artists?

Every so often, it's important to frame younger artists in an art-historical context. Doing an exhibition with historical work creates a continuum and shows how ideas evolve over time. This exhibition was organized in collaboration with Adrian Rosenfeld, who is a private dealer in Los Angeles and a former director of the Matthew Marks Gallery. It features sculptures by El Anatsui, Carol Bove, Gianni Piacentino, Louise Bourgeois and Jiro Takamatsu.

You're constantly at work with your artists on shows locally and globally. What outside projects are you currently developing?

You're right that we do a lot of exciting things outside the physical gallery space. Right now, I am organizing shows with Trevor Paglen in the Whitechapel in London and ZKM in Karlsruhe. Zarouhie Abdalian is also going to do a commission at Mass MoCA next year, and Emily Wardill is working on a big solo show at the Bergen Kunsthall. I just produced a limited-edition artist's book with Liam Everett in collaboration with Rite Editions and his New York gallery, On Stellar Rays.

There's an ongoing debate about the health of San Francisco's contemporary art scene. With the current boom, is the city better positioned to gain traction with the international art scene than in the past?

San Francisco has historically been a boom-and-bust kind of town. It seems to be continually in flux. But the business world is so strong here now that it feels like the city is growing up and becoming competitive with other international business centers. For example, there are direct flights to Zurich because Hoffman-La Roche acquired Genentech. Six of the top 20 Large Cap companies in the United States are based in the Bay Area: Not only Google and Apple, but also Chevron, Wells Fargo, Oracle and Facebook. I think that there may be downsides to this for Bay Area culture writ large, but I hope one upside will be the availability of resources to support art and culture at all levels.

We have amazing intellectual capital here, from curators to scholars and writers. Who do you consider San Francisco's next great "art minds?"

The young curators at Kadist, Heidi Rabben and Arash Favez are doing a lot of great things. There also are several exceptional young artists working in San Francisco. I love K.R.M. Mooney's work. And I would include Zarouhie Abdalian, Nate Boyce, Will Rogan and Liam Everett—all part of our program—amongst

the Bay Area's finest. Apsara DiQuinzio, the curator at the Berkeley Art Museum, is working on great shows for the Matrix program and the new building, and Ali Gass, the new deputy director of the Cantor Arts Center, is bringing contemporary art to Stanford in an unprecedented way.

What 2016 show are you anticipating?

Of course the opening of SFMOMA is the most exciting and will bring a sea change to the art world locally. There are so many new buildings opening this year; it will be the new architecture and the depth of the various collections that will be interesting. Besides the new museums opening in San Francisco and their inaugural shows, I am looking forward to the Met Breuer. It's exciting that the Met will be able to expand and exhibit its contemporary holdings.

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