

KATHLEEN ARIATTI BANTON

Between the River and the Lake

20February – 26March 2016

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JONATHAN FERRARA GALLERY is proud to announce *Between the River and the Lake*, the third solo exhibition of artist **KATHLEEN ARIATTI BANTON**. The exhibition will be on view in the centre gallery from 20 February to 26 March with a *first Saturday artist reception* on **5 March from 6-9pm**. As a New Orleans native, Kathleen is deeply influenced by and often references the geography of the city in her gestural and textural abstract paintings and whimsical, aluminum sculptures. Motifs of Lake Pontchartrain and the Mississippi River and colors from City Park and the French Quarter are subtly employed throughout her entire oeuvre, but here in this latest series the viewer really sees Banton's muses take center stage as the primary form in each composition.

Banton remarked of her new body of work . . .

I have always lived between the river and the lake, sandwiched amid the textures and sounds of the river's powerful currents and the lake's rising and retreating surge. Memories ride those currents, sometimes resting and settling, enriching the silt floor of Lake Pontchartrain or churned by the painted paddlewheels of the riverboats. The wet air above the river and the lake sprays its liquid thoughts, creating a deep rich humidity of past moments in my life, permeating the skin molecules of the residents of this shifting land between the lake and the river. Can one purge some of these experiences with sweat, only to rehydrate with more experiential waters? My experiential waters come in a variety of frozen shapes, textures and sounds. The weekly visits from the Ice Man to the call of the bugle of the Waffle Man. Perched on the pinball machine as my father orders me a Shirley Temple on a Saturday at the triangulated corner bar and grill, just a block from the racetrack and a block away from my house. Hearing its screen door, affixed with the Sunbeam Bread metal sign with the image of a blonde haired girl, squeak and slam with each patron entering or leaving. Sitting cramped in metal mop buckets to keep cool during a typically scalding New Orleans summer.

Just like the waters with its underlying channels, my metaphorical currents and themes flow beneath the multitude of paint layers on canvas. My concern with society's immersion and direction toward simulated textural, digital and computerized experiences, disregarding the tactile senses is ever present. Man's need to touch and make marks, and the primitive quality of the instinctive mark is a human experience intertwining all of us, no matter what culture or belief. My work begins with an intuitive mark, shape, or form, proceeding to the multi-layering of the artistic and compositional process, and eventually triggering an emotional response to a specific event or place, a personal memory. Using primarily brushes and construction tools, additional creviced, scraped and scratchy surfaces are introduced. The initial emotive spark becomes intellectual in the constant and seemingly never ending anxiety producing decision making of color, texture, gesture and shape placement. Maintaining always the affective and expressive source of the original mark.

Much happens between the river and the lake.



Kathleen Ariatti Banton received her BFA from Auburn University and her MFA from Boston University. She has exhibited her work across the country including the International Sculpture Center in New Jersey, Huntsville Museum of Art, Meridian Museum of Art, Alexandria Museum of Art, Zigler Museum of Art and Masur Museum of Art. She is the recipient of numerous awards and honors including fellowships at the Virginia Center for Creative Arts, the Ragdale Foundation in Illinois, the Hambidge Center in Georgia and Skidmore College in New York. Her work is in the permanent collection of the New Orleans Museum of Art, the City of New Orleans, Jefferson Parish of Louisiana, First NBC, City Bank, Resource Bank, Whitney National Bank, University Medical Center, Barrasso Usdin Kupperman Freeman & Sarver, Matt Greenbaum, and Murphy, Rogers Sloss and Gambel and additional law and medical corporations. She was commissioned to design and install a public art sculpture for the Jefferson Parish Courthouse just outside of New Orleans and her work was recently acquired by Paramount in the newly developed area of South Market of New Orleans and the recently constructed University Medical Center as well as First NBC Training Center.

For further information, press or sales inquiries please contact the gallery director, Matthew Weldon Showman, at matthew@jonathanferraragallery.com or at +1.504.522.5471.

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