

Artist John Lark

They Already Had, and Had What's Everything

November 6-19, 2017

Opening Reception: Wednesday, November 8, 2017 6-8 PM

Van der Plas Gallery, 156 Orchard Street, New York, NY 10002

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LES Artist to Have First Solo Show

Artist John Lark in association with Van der Plas Gallery will be presenting: *They Already Had, and Had What's Everything*, his debut solo exhibition. This exhibition comes after Lark's participation in *ALL ART +*, at the Van der Plas Gallery. Director, Adriaan Van der Plas says of his work, "There are aspects of this show that are immediately compelling. However, when observed carefully, much of the work can be uncomfortable and agitating. The challenging nature of this show is what makes these paintings so important." Van der Plas' statement speaks to the layered nature of the show.

Lark presents a mix of the familiar; images from his upbringing interspersed with fragmented and at times erotic depictions of the human body. The mélange of flesh and nostalgia creates tension. Flashes of flesh in the heat of desire are repeated until they lose all meaning, referencing the generative nature of art as well as an on-the-nose nod to the acts of sexual reproduction taking place on the canvas.

His work entitled "Study of Layered Face" depicts fragments of a woman foregrounded by the images of homes from Lark's native Lansing. Not only is the sex reproductive but also the homes, they become literal reproductions built to house the exploding populations of returning G.I's and their young families in postwar America. The theme of propagation does not end with sex and housing. Michigan is home to various other forms of production from agriculture to the automotive industry, which is echoed in the layers of Lark's work.

This notion of propagation was inspired in some part by Bataille's 1931 surrealist text, *The Solar Anus*, which speaks directly to ideas of repetition and the illusion of fragmentation. Bataille asserts that, "Love and life appear to be separate only because everything on earth is broken apart by vibrations... However, there are no vibrations that are not conjugated with a continuous circular movement." In this context, Lark's canvases are a conflation of space and time that may be more accurate and expansive than reality.

Lark was born in 1982 and graduated from the University of Michigan in 2005 with a BFA. He moved to New York City in 2006 where he initially studied at Columbia University, after which he completed an MFA at the New York Academy of Art in 2012. This is Lark's first solo show.

Written by: Nicole Lania