

June 1, 2019
For Immediate Release:

FIONA ACKERMAN: *HERBARIA*

Opening reception: Thursday, June 13th, 5 – 8 pm.
Exhibition Dates: June 13 – July 13th, 2019

Gallery Jones is pleased to present *Herbaria*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by Fiona Ackerman. In this recent body of work, the artist explores her interest in botanical painting, a pursuit that had its heyday during the 18th century Age of Imperialism.



Herbaria, acrylic on canvas, 60 x 60 inches

Inspired by prominent women of the time, notably Maria Sibylla Merian (1647–1717), a German-born naturalist and scientific illustrator, Ackerman takes art history and science “into the realm of abstraction and free aesthetic expression” through large oil and acrylic on canvas paintings. In the works, space is delineated and categorized with intention, revealing insects, birds and plants as curiosities and subjects of study.

The artist writes:

While it was acceptable, even desirable, for women to pursue painting and drawing as a hobby in the 17th and 18th Centuries, [female] botanical artists were able to forge important artistic and scientific careers, and earn a living.

What struck me...was the powerful tension between the medium’s requirement for accuracy, documentation, and the dynamic of interpretation that motivates the artist. Almost always, they look at nature and find a tangled garden. A lady’s ambivalence to the rough. An artist’s reaction to life in the full, away from the drawing room.

Originally from Montreal, Fiona Ackerman lives and works in Vancouver, BC. Since completing her BFA through Concordia and ECIAD, Fiona has exhibited across Canada and in Europe (London, Berlin, Nuremberg, Munster, Düsseldorf). She was longlisted for the Sobey Prize in 2015 and received honourable mention for the Kingston Prize for Canadian Portraiture in 2009. Recent projects include a wrap mural for a building in Vancouver, and a commissioned 10-minute video projection for the Burrard Arts Foundation Façade Festival in 2017.