

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 11, 2019

Florilegium
Exhibition and Sale

March 22- April 25, 2019
Opening Reception: Friday, March 22, 6-9pm

Eleventh Street Arts
46-06 11th Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
www.eleventhstreetarts.com



Eleventh Street Arts presents *Florilegium*, an exhibition curated by Katie G. Whipple, featuring the work of Alyssa Benner (Six Floral), Sarah Bird, Katie Davis (Ponderosa & Thyme), Zoe Dufour, Lara Call Gastinger, Kathleen Speranza, David Troncoso, and Katie G. Whipple.

Florilegium will feature over 30 works of painting, illustration, and sculpture, as well as botanical installation and floral design. The works range from minuscule specimen illustrations to a six foot by twelve foot floral painting, and from traditional oil still lifes to living floral sculptures. *Florilegium* showcases each artist's relationship with Nature, creating an immersive sensory experience. This is a show that is meant to be experienced in person, so visitors can explore the textures of life in Nature and in Art.

"In Latin the word florilegium literally translates to 'a gathering of flowers.' With this show, I gather together some of my favorite artists to tell the story of our reciprocal relationship with flora. Though we represent distinct voices across a variety of disciplines, a common thread remains: we work hand in hand with Nature to celebrate beauty. It is my hope that *Florilegium* will inspire visitors to look more carefully at the natural world, and will remind viewers that we are part of Nature, not outside it." — Katie G. Whipple, curator

Eleventh Street Arts is an art gallery for contemporary drawings, paintings and sculptures. Adjacent to the collaborative artist studios of Grand Central Atelier, Eleventh Street Arts presents new work that invokes, challenges, and celebrates the classical tradition. www.eleventhstreetarts.com

Featured Artists:

Alyssa Benner (Six Floral) was born in rural Pennsylvania. Her love for flora and foraging began there and has come to fruition in New York City. Merging high quality flowers as well as flowers and foliage that are often viewed as "weeds" has become a major interest of hers. Compounded by her appreciation for ikebana, her designs tend to be minimalist and evocative. www.sixfloral.com

"The work on display in *Florilegium* is a collaboration between sculptor Zoe Dufour and myself. After initially seeing the sculpted heads that Zoe creates I begin to think about what flowers lend themselves best to the shape, size and color of the piece. I then allow myself to dream up the style and shape I would like the flowers to take. I see them as an extension of

the sculptures. The flowers juxtapose the very realistic nature of the sculptures and can be seen a surge of color and form.” —Alyssa Brenner, Six Floral

Sarah Bird grew up in Concord, Massachusetts, the home of the American Transcendentalist movement, where she developed an early love for landscape and art. She attended Brown University before spending four years at the Grand Central Atelier in New York City. Though she set out to become a landscape painter, while in New York she departed from the school’s figure-centric curriculum to devote herself to the more intimate, self-determined landscapes of still life, the poetic genre that remains her fascination. She now lives with her husband, writer Nick Neely, in the Wood River Valley of Idaho, near Sun Valley, where the natural world surrounds. The recipient of a 2017 Idaho Arts Grant, her paintings have been shown in New York, Los Angeles, and Block Island, Rhode Island. www.sarahwhitemorebird.com

“Keeping company with plants and staying open to the ways they change and react and relate feels like the most personal thing I do. I work from observation, but pick and choose and add and subtract according to my own feelings. My painting, *Croy Canyon*, is a reflection of where I live in mountainous Idaho. It is a collection of layered plants from walks in my home canyon over the course of a summer. While my other work takes the form of more traditional still lifes, the subjects are, to my mind, also contrived, altaresque - not naturalistic. They are altars or shrines, though maybe just to reality or to the season, or to simple sensations.” —Sarah Bird

Katie Davis is an internationally acclaimed florist based in Salem, Oregon, the heart of the Willamette Valley. Since founding Ponderosa & Thyme in 2011, Katie has become known for her textural designs inspired by nature. In addition to creating florals for intimate weddings, Katie and her team host workshops worldwide for florists and other creatives to explore the art of floral design. Flowers are a language of their own, and while teaching in English, Katie is able to cross cultures with her thoughtful and emotional approach. Just as comfortable teaching the basics as she is pushing experienced professionals to expand their creative boundaries, Katie loves to help people grow, discover, and connect. www.ponderosaandthyme.com

Katie will build a large-scale floral installation in the gallery, inspired by the other works in *Florilegium*. The installation invites physical interaction with the exhibition, as the flowers cocoon surrounding paintings and visitors.

Zoe Dufour is a figurative sculptor living and working in New York City. Zoe grew up in Northern California, where she studied under artists Rita Alvarez and Gerald Heffernon. She has studied art at the Ashland Academy of Art, Grand Central Atelier, and Hudson River Fellowship, and has received many awards in her field, including an Art Renewal Scholarship, First Place in GCA’s 2015 Figure Sculpting Competition, and First Place the National Sculpture Society’s 2016 and 2018 Portrait Sculpting Competition. She works for Studio EIS, and various other artists and companies in the Tri-State area and is currently living in Brooklyn, NY. www.zoedufoursculpture.com

“I am interested in the relationship between plants and people, and how that co-evolution influences our lives. By sculpting portraits as vessels for plants, and I hope to evoke that deep necessary connection between ourselves and nature.” —Zoe Dufour

Lara Call Gastinger is a botanical artist and illustrator in Charlottesville, Virginia. She was the chief illustrator for the Flora of Virginia Project after she received her master’s degree from Virginia Tech in Plant Ecology. She has been awarded two gold medals (2007, 2018) at the Royal Horticultural Society garden show in London and her work has been in several ASBA

traveling exhibits and catalogs. Her painting was accepted into the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. www.laracallgaster.com

“The subjects of my art come from the natural world and reveal detailed evidence of change, decay, and processes that occur in nature. I strive to make a plant portrait in such a way that it reveals its character and uniqueness. My focus is on the small details in nature, down to the small venations in leaves, which hopefully inspires others to look deeper and pause a bit longer.” —Lara Call Gaster

Kathleen Speranza is an artist with more than 30 years of experience painting and teaching. She maintains a studio in Massachusetts and teaches workshops across the country and abroad. Ms. Speranza is on the faculty at Rhode Island School of Design and teaches Painting and Drawing to sophomores in the Illustration Department. She is also an affiliate faculty member at Jerusalem Studio School in Civita Castellana, Italy. Kathleen's paintings have been exhibited in museums, college art galleries, and commercial galleries in the Northeast and beyond. Public collections include Ralph Lauren Co., Mediatech Corporation, Harvard Museum of Natural History, New England Biolabs and Cell Signaling Technologies. Her work is also included in many private collections in the USA and abroad. Kathleen lives and works in Lynn, Massachusetts with her husband Parker Heath, their son Jackson and a big dog named Skipper. www.kathleensperanza.com

“These paintings are part of an ongoing series using Garden Roses as a vehicle for poetic expression. Their exquisite and transient beauty keeps me spellbound.” —Kathleen Speranza

David Troncoso is a painter, draftsman, and woodworker from Long Island, NY, whose work is inspired by Renaissance and Medieval paintings, illustrations and frames. Troncoso first studied scientific illustration and music engineering at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, but soon left to study in New York City at the Grand Central Academy. There he spent four years studying classical drawing, painting and sculpture in the GCA's core program. Troncoso continued his training as a copyist at the MET completing numerous life size replicas in oil. He is currently the artist in residence at the William Steeple Davis Studio where he is combining all of his skills to build a large altarpiece. www.davidtroncosoart.com

“The insects and flora of the natural world contain more beauty and wonder than can beheld in a cursory glance. Painting their image from life allows me the time to patiently observe and appreciate these curiosities in all of their elegant forms.” —David Troncoso

Katie G. Whipple grew up in central Indiana painting with her mother, artist Libby Whipple. After graduating high school, Katie decided to forgo traditional college education and move to New York City to study academic painting at the Grand Central Atelier. She has since been the recipient of many awards, including scholarships from the Grand Central Atelier and a purchase award from the Indiana State Museum. Most notably, she received the 2013 Alma Schapiro Prize, which sent her to the American Academy in Rome to study the work of the old masters. She now works full time as a professional painter, teaches part time at the Grand Central Atelier, and lives in Queens, NY with her husband, artist Brendan Johnston, and their dog Theo. *Florilegium* is Katie's first curated show. www.kgwhipple.com

“My piece in the show is a love letter to my favorite painting, *The Painted Garden* of the Villa Livia (30 BC), and my favorite book, *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. With these monumental works guiding me, I hoped to create a painting that wraps the viewer in abundant beauty—the gift of flowers.” —Katie G. Whipple

Florilegium Events:

Opening Reception

Friday, March 22, 6:00 - 9:00pm

free and open to the public

Live Floral Arranging Demonstration, "Dutch Old Master Still Life," by Ponderosa & Thyme

Saturday, March 23, 3:30 - 4:30pm

tickets available at www.eleventhstreetarts.com

Panel Discussion with Florilegium Artists, moderated by the curator

Saturday, March 23, 5:30 - 6:30pm

free and open to the public

Demo and Discussion with Zoe Dufour and Six Floral

Sunday, March 24, 2019, 11:00am - 12:00pm

tickets available at www.elevethstreetarts.com

Rose Painting Workshop with Kathleen Speranza

April 2-6, Tuesday - Saturday

enroll in the workshop at www.grandcentralatelier.org

Flower Painting Demo with Katie G. Whipple

Friday, April 12, 1:00 - 5:00pm

tickets available at www.grandcentralatelier.org

Earth Day Talk, "Coupling the Urban Landscape and Natural Environment"

with Eric Dalski, Highview Creations

Monday, April 22, 6:00-7:00 pm

free and open to the public

Celebration of Spring Soiree, Farewell Reception

Thursday, April 25, 6:00 - 9:00 pm

free and open to the public

Gallery Hours:

In addition to the special gallery events listed above, gallery hours for *Florilegium* will be held Saturdays and Sundays from 10am - 5pm, or by appointment.

To schedule an appointment or inquire about purchasing work, please contact Eleventh Street Arts by phone or email: 718-392-5164, info@eleventhstreetarts.com, www.eleventhstreetarts.com

Press Contact/Image Requests:

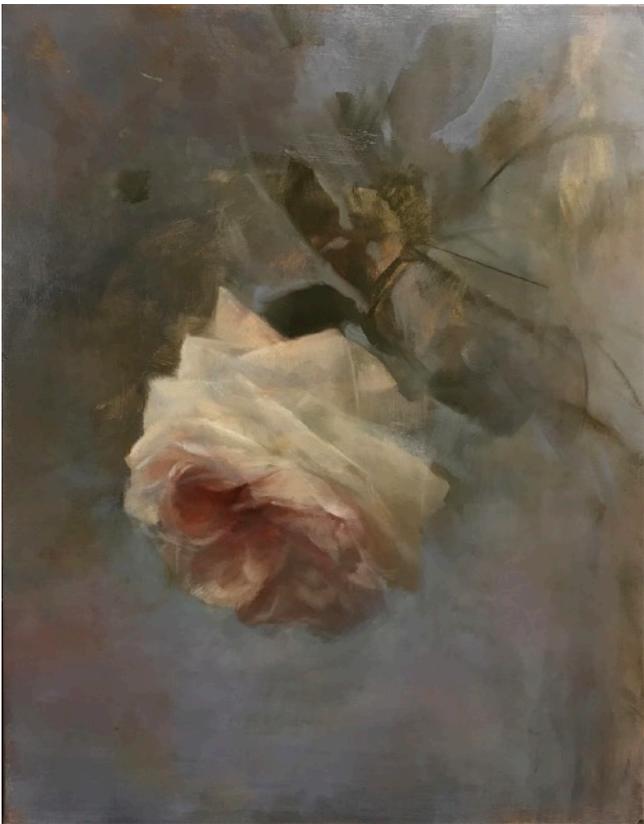
Katie Whipple, curator: katiegwhipple@gmail.com, 317-371-1306



Sarah Bird, *Croy Canyon*, oil on linen, 2018, 30"x24"



Zoe Dufour and Six Floral collaboration, *Mental Growth*, finished plaster and live flora, 2018, life-size bust



Kathleen Speranza, *Heavy Rose*, oil on panel, 2018, 14"x11"



Lara Call Gastinger, *Late Sunflowers*, watercolor on paper, 2014, 15"x22"