



Palo Gallery Presents *A Blue Semiotic*
July 7–August 31, 2023



Brianna Rose Brooks, *A Good Sign*, 2020
Courtesy the Artist and Palo Gallery

New York, NY (June 20, 2023) – Palo Gallery is pleased to present *A Blue Semiotic*, a thematic group exhibition that interrogates the nature of representation and the myriad ways in which artists use symbolism to indicate the presence of their subjects. The exhibition is predominantly comprised of new, figurative works by artists including Lewinale Havette, Brianna Rose Brooks, Yannick Lowery, Kim Faler, Bianca Walker, Leon Pozniakow, Adolphus Washington, and Audrey Lyall, and uses the color blue as a recurring motif. Exploring parallels and convergences between written language and visual language, *A Blue Semiotic* interrogates the ways in which artists tell stories and convey messages through word and

sign. The exhibition also shines a light upon the historical use of semiotics, and the color blue, in Black portraiture.

A Blue Semiotic examines the portrayal of the human form with and without explicit depiction of the self, and how the essence of life manifests even in vague reference to the body. Utilizing signs such as icons, indexes, and symbols to indicate the existence of a being, these artworks muddle the notion of representation and materialize the complex nature by which artists delineate the presence of their subjects. Semiotics – the study of signs and symbols – seeks to understand how society successfully communicates abstract ideas through visual means, such as pictorial expressions or the written word. *A Blue Semiotic* encourages viewers to explore the ways in which artists communicate concepts of personhood through the simple use of color, form, line, shape, space, texture, and value. Through the motif of the color blue, the exhibition brings to the fore an even deeper consideration of blue as a color that signifies substantial philosophical, psychological, and societal meanings. By inviting each artist to personally explore the color blue in their work, the exhibition exposes the adaptability of the hue in signifying variable meanings.

About the Curator

Adeja Sterling graduated from Emory University in 2021 with a BA in Art History. After her 2-year stint at the High Museum as a Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellow during her final two years at Emory, she continued to further her education at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts as the Harriet Griffin Fellow to pursue a MA in Art History with a concentration in Curatorial Studies and African American Modern and Contemporary art. She is currently writing a thesis on artist Simone Leigh, with a focus on the (anti)-monumental status of her works. She has worked for NYU Libraries as a Graduate Assistant, a Course Assistant for a graduate level course at the Institute of Fine Arts, and as a Gallery Associate at Palo Gallery. Adeja has previously held internships and positions at Atlanta's High Museum of Art, Emory's *BLACKSTAR Magazine, Atlanta's ARTPAPERS Magazine, the Studio Museum's Museum Education Practicum, and the Museum of Contemporary Art GA.

About Palo Gallery

Established in 2018 in New York City by third-generation art collector and dealer Paul Henkel, Palo Gallery brings to bear a tradition of art scholarship and patronage, working as a true thought partner with artists to realize their visions and create dynamic presentations. Extensive research by the Palo curatorial team ensures that each exhibition is advised by the art historical canon and contemporary cultural touchpoints. In 2022, Palo Gallery opened its new 3,400-square-foot flagship space designed by Selldorf Architects in the NoHo district of Manhattan as the only dedicated partner showcasing Vica by Annabelle Selldorf. A destination of discovery, Palo Gallery's multifaceted program ranges from tightly curated, thematic group exhibitions to insightful art historically informed solo exhibitions spanning a breadth of artistic endeavors.

Since its inception, Palo Gallery has sought to incorporate thematic elements into its curatorial practice – whether it be group shows or solo presentations. Early exhibitions marked the gallery's foray into concept-driven presentations focusing on themes of memory and our most primitive instincts. *Memories Manifest* (2021) saw seven artists working in response to each other and the theme of memory, while *Primordial* (2021) investigated the ways that thoughts, emotions, reactions, and experiences speak to our most primitive instincts. The large-scale *Real Wild* (2022) presented an array of representations and interpretations of iconography from the American Wild West, a setting of which many of us have a collective archetype that the exhibition sought to re-contextualize. Building on the success of these

conceptual group exhibitions, Palo has continued navigating contemporary cultural topics via art historical narratives with a number of solo exhibitions. Today, the gallery continues to showcase thematic presentations that offer Palo Gallery and its artists a unique opportunity to explore pivotal cultural and historical topics at a level that transcends those achieved via a standard solo exhibition.

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