

REBECCA FARR
Animal Love Thyself

May 11 - June 15, 2019
Opening Reception: Saturday, May 11th, 6-8pm
Artist Talk: Saturday, June 1st 4pm

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Rebecca Farr
Last Supper
2019
Oil on canvas
36 by 48 inches

Klowden Mann is proud to present *Animal love thyself*, Los Angeles-based artist Rebecca Farr's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery. The exhibition features oil paintings and ceramic sculptural installations deconstructing biblical stories that expel, sacrifice and cast the human body as a vessel, remnant or remain. Farr has made a study of the moments in which the body is asked to abandon itself as an act of spiritual development and offers an integrative remedy to an old wound. The show will be on view from May 11th to June 15th, with an opening reception on Saturday May 11th from 6-8pm.

As Farr states, "We are on the edge of just how far we can abstract ourselves, and a crisis of what is being left behind. This show is a ritual to bring the animal back into these mythic stories that have specifically and tactically vaporized the body into something cultivated, domesticated, and digestible. We have been sacrificing authenticity and pulling ourselves out of the animal body to become culture. Inviting that primal energy back into our daily lives feels critical both for our survival as a species, and our mental health."

In *Animal love thyself*, Farr enacts installations throughout the gallery space that invite the viewer to join her in ritually correcting the foundational Western investment in mind/body duality, and the eviction of the animal and the feminine from the seat of consciousness. The spaces in the gallery are organized by the parameters of myth—opening with Adam and Eve, their expulsion from Eden and its consequences. The resulting split of consciousness from body and our embarrassment/denial of our animal selves are seen through Farr's opening oil paintings and sculptures. We see the Garden with and without its human occupants: verdant and fertile in both moments but arching into absence in the second painting, with Farr's oil palette layered here in reds; the color of fertility as well as slaughter. The entryway indicates domesticity and sacrifice, as coat racks placed toward the front of the exhibition hold ceramic braids, evidencing a power that has been frozen into stillness through a gesture of domestication. A small table and lamp stand nearby, as if Adam and Eve are not just missing but violently erased: expulsion as an act not just of absence, but of tearing or ripping away.

The space is laid out in a way that feels familiarly like the interior of a house. Throughout each mythological engagement, Farr uses sculptural plaster and ceramic interpretations of furniture to un-domesticate the very objects that daily re-affirm our separation from nature and our willing sacrifice of our wilder selves for the comfort of culture. Moving into the main space, Farr approaches the Coronation of the Virgin, and addresses the de-sexualization of Mary's creation of life—or more accurately un-sexing—by offering her a ceramic pelvic crown and a

dresser vanity with items symbolic of her creative reproductive power. Mary rests in a space of returned ownership, her fertile nature welcoming us all back into ourselves as sacred animals.

In the largest room of the gallery, we find Farr's ritualistic repair of the Last Supper; the impending sacrifice of the corporal as it prepares for the violent destruction of itself. The moment when a new hierarchy of power demotes the physical birth (feminine) and elevates the symbolic rebirth (masculine). The Last Supper is here rewritten into a feast of carnality; a celebration of the animal and the feminine. Beneath a salon of paintings referencing centuries of male artists that concretize these ritual stories, a long table is set for 13, with place settings that drip with organic imperfection and messiness, anthropomorphic and undomesticated such that only those who embody their beastly and sexual nature without shame can enjoy this meal. Thirteen pairs of clay feet stand in front of the table on the floor formed claw-like, primate feet in washed glaze.

Farr's Last Supper focuses on earthly feast and presence of the body in a manner in which every part of the self is invited to the table. The presence of the sculpted feet also reference Jesus's act of washing his disciples' feet, and the refusal of hierarchy embedded in that act. Farr presents this story—one that is so fundamental to Christian culture—as a narrative in which no-one rules, and all are welcome in the entirety of their messy, complicated selves. Here, she allows us to hold on to the foundational story, while inviting the animal and the female back in; perhaps recognizing that they never really left at all.

Rebecca Farr (b. 1973, Glendale, CA) was raised in the Pacific Northwest, and lives and works in Los Angeles. She has exhibited in Los Angeles at Klowden Mann, Five Car Garage, Maiden LA, ForYourArt and PØST, in Seattle at the Jacob Lawrence Gallery, SAW Gallery and Velocity Studio, along with presentations at multiple art fairs throughout the United States. From 2015-17 she was a faculty artist in the education department at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, overseeing multiple public projects. Her recent residencies include Kaus Australis in Rotterdam, Netherlands and Les Laboratoires Aubervilliers in Paris, France.