

HARSH
COLLECTIVE

Brave New World

Featuring Alexandra Houx Grounds and Tara Lewis

March 15th - April 10th, 2023

Opening Reception March 15th, 7 - 9 p.m. at 133 Eldridge Street



Alexandra Houx Grounds, *Brave New World*, 2024, oil on canvas, 72 x 60 inches.



Tara Lewis, *Batman*, 2024, oil on linen, 30 x 24 inches.

New York, New York - Harsh Collective is pleased to announce *Brave New World*, a duo exhibition featuring **Alexandra Houx Grounds** and **Tara Lewis**, curated by Juliette Eberle. The exhibition will take place from March 15–April 10, with an opening reception on **March 15th, from 7-9 p.m., at 133 Eldridge St, New York, NY 10002**. The exhibition will feature several new paintings from each artist. As part of Grounds' presentation, the opening reception will feature an immersive AI print station presented by EverArt. The platform will allow a limited number of visitors to become part of the creation process as they directly prompt and interact with an AI model trained on Grounds' distinctive painting style. This allows visitors to create their own art print of anything they can imagine, and with the help of AI, the creation will be made exclusively with Grounds' painting strokes and color hues.

The exhibition will explore the relationship between Lewis and Grounds as mentor and mentee, and the effect each artist had on their respective practices. Their relationship began nearly a decade ago when Lewis was Grounds' art professor and mentor at Phillips Exeter. Both Lewis and Grounds utilize portraiture to explore the dichotomy of the contemporary moment: the yearning to embrace the nostalgic past whilst adapting to the futuristic present. The duo challenges preconceived notions of authenticity, personhood, agency, and the female experience through their reciprocal artistic languages of iconography and technology, respectively.

"*A Brave New World* underscores the importance of human connection, more specifically, the relationship to self and the vital role educators play in fostering and empowering students' creativity for their futures," shares Juliette Eberle, curator of *Brave New World*.

Grounds states that "in *Brave New World*, the canvas becomes a crucible where the future melds with the now. This ethos is encapsulated in my latest series, a collection deeply influenced by Artificial Intelligence. This technology isn't just a tool; it's a passion that drives me to expand the horizons of my

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own creativity and ideas. These paintings represent a journey into uncharted territories. They continue the narrative threads prevalent in my previous works: the exploration of gender, the intricate dance of time and space, the haunting beauty of the Arizona landscapes of my youth, and those ephemeral moments of magic.”

Lewis adds that “in the context of *Brave New World*, I delve into the nuanced realm of iconic masks, contemplating the authenticity of humanity against a backdrop of assigned traits. The paintings depict everyday females adorned with superhero masks, seamlessly merging recognized characteristics from figures. Within these portraits, reminiscent of yearbook photos, I strive to capture the veiled essence of these characters, creating a dynamic fusion of iconic traits within the fabric of ordinary life. These portraits invite the viewer to reflect on the fluidity of identity.”

About the Artists

Alexandra Houx Grounds

Alexandra Houx Grounds is an American oil painter specializing in large-scale portraiture. Based in New York City, she honed her craft and earned a Bachelor in Fine Arts with departmental honors at Columbia University. Grounds embarked on her artistic journey early in life, commencing her professional art career during high school, and has been painting professionally ever since. Grounds has had four solo exhibitions here in New York, participated in numerous group shows, and had a painting acquired by the esteemed Castello di Ugento Museum in Italy. In addition, Alexandra’s work has garnered recognition and found its place in prominent art collections around the globe.

<https://alexandragrounds.com/>

Tara Lewis

Tara Lewis’ paintings challenge conventional portraiture with a focus on female agency and the contemporary complexities of femininity. Exploring cultural anthropology, individuality, and personhood, the work weaves a fresh narrative that delves into self-awareness, irreverence, and satirical punch, informed by critical reflections on expectations and stereotypes associated with gender roles. These figurative paintings redefine cultural icons, drawing inspiration from a sustained exploration of childhood memories associated with familiar characters in cartoons, TV shows, and coming-of-age movies. Tara’s work has been featured in various solo and group exhibitions in New York City as well as at the Aspen Art Museum, CO and the Watermill Center, NY. Her paintings are held in major collections including The Phelan Art Collection, Brooke Shields, Seavest Collection, Ashley Longshore, and Bunker Artspace. Tara has been featured in publications such as Artnet News, Cultured, Whitewall, Women’s Wear Daily and Fine Art Connoisseur. Tara received a B.A. in Studio Art at the University of New Hampshire and an M.A.T. in Visual Studies at SMFA at Tufts University. She was recently selected for a painting residency at Anderson Ranch Art Center in Snowmass Village, CO. Her studio practice is based in New York City and New England.

<https://www.taralewisstudio.com>

About EverArt

EverArt is an AI tool designed to enhance and redefine an artist’s creative process by training powerful AI image models on the artist’s unique visual identity. With the upload of their specific images, artists can train the EverArt platform on what their practice looks like and feels like – creating an infinite canvas for creation.

<https://www.everart.ai/>

About Harsh Collective

Harsh Collective is an artist-first gallery that amplifies emerging contemporary artists’ voices and offers a bespoke platform where collectors, artists, and guests are all welcome. Harsh Collective brings the artist’s story to the forefront of the art world, offering a creative space driven by community.

www.harshcollective.com