

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jonathan Cowan and Rachael Gorchov: *Nonspecific Places*

99 Norman Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11222

June 3 – July 10, 2016

Opening Reception: Friday, June 3, 6-9PM

“The arithmetical world is there for me only when and so long as I occupy the arithmetical standpoint. But the natural world, the world in the ordinary sense of the word, is constantly there for me, so long as I live naturally and look in its direction.”¹

Simuvac Projects is proud to present the two-person exhibition *Nonspecific Places*, featuring the works of Jonathan Cowan and Rachael Gorchov. Their work, exhibited together for the first time, allows viewers to inhabit a removed reality in which the natural world is at the forefront, although often placed at arms length. While Cowan and Gorchov begin with specific places, Cowan painting from photographs of visited locales, and Gorchov working from her sketches of the lawns, ponds, and plant life of the suburban landscape, ultimately they each remove any specificity through their respective multilayered processes.

Cowan’s surfaces straddle the calm and the cautionary, the familiar and the unfamiliar. While he traditionally begins his landscapes as paintings on paper, which he then photocopies and transfers to his surface, he has, for the works included in *Nonspecific Places*, painted directly onto his surface. After completing a painting, Cowan embroiders multicolored forms that hover over the landscape and both suggest and deny the presence of the spiritual. The embroidered abstract shape at the center of *Form in the Sky* (2016), from which thin lines of various colors emerge and cut across the ominous cloud that dominates the picture plane, recalls both a Christ figure with open arms and Malevich’s Suprematist forms, which replace traditional icons with the non-representational.

Gorchov’s painted three-dimensional pieces allow viewers to simulate the actions of exploration that are slowly diminishing along with the natural landscape. For her recent works Gorchov has introduced the use of a Claude Glass, an 18th-century observation device through which she views the suburban landscape, sketches it on site and then returns to her studio where she “builds a highly subjective experience that highlights what is hidden in plain view”. *Three O’Clock* (2016) takes the shape of an inverted Claude Glass and requires the viewer to peer around the curled edges to see its backside, a soft-yellow, covered with multicolored strokes and patches. Continuing to the front, one finds an abstracted landscape, comprised of a deep blue background over which Gorchov

¹Edmund Husserl, "Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology", in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, edited by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 139.

has painted bright green flora; when viewed closely it surrounds the viewer, “creating a forced perspective and panoramic experience.”

Jonathan Cowan was born in 1982 in Temple, Texas. He attended The University of Texas at San Antonio in August of 2003 where he received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in drawing in 2006. He currently lives and works in New York City.



Jonathan Cowan, *Form in the Sky*, 2016, acrylic and cotton thread on monks cloth, 38x34

Rachael Gorchov received her BFA from Tyler School of Art, Temple University and her MFA from Hunter College, City University of New York. She has participated in exhibitions at The English Folk Dance and Song Society in London, Galeria Arsenal in Białystok, Poland and in New York, recently at Driscoll Babcock Galleries, Owen James Gallery and the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM). She is a member of Tiger Strikes Asteroid, an artist-run gallery in Brooklyn and is Full Time Faculty at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. Originally from Philadelphia, she lives and works in New York City.



Rachael Gorchov, *Three O'Clock*, 2016, acrylic on handmade archival paper mache, clay, and burlap, 22"x25"x14"