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**January 2020**

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**City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs  
presents  
Three Solo Exhibitions  
from  
Lukas Geronimas  
Nevine Mahmoud  
Vanessa McConnell**

**August 6 to September 27, 2020  
Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery**

*Exhibition Opening Reception: Sunday, August 2, 2020, 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.*

Los Angeles, CA - The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) and the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (LAMAG) are pleased to present the first institutional solo exhibitions by Los Angeles artists Lukas Geronimas, Nevine Mahmoud, and Vanessa McConnell.

Working variously in painting, sculpture, and installation, each of these artists possesses an intense dedication to their craft and an obsessive compulsion to make. While the artists employ radically different methodologies, they share a labor-intensive approach, painstakingly working and reworking their materials many times - be it wood, stone, or paint - to transform them into entirely new objects. In this way, Geronimas, Mahmoud, and McConnell all point to the alchemy of the creative process, inviting us to consider the nature of our subliminal responses to specific objects, shapes, textures, and colors.

Lukas Geronimas has created a series of new sculptural works, commissioned especially for the gallery, that evoke ancient ritualistic objects. This includes a column, tomb, and a philosopher's stone, as well as a series of pointed Gothic-style window frames, that make reference to the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery's church-like floor plan. The exhibition will culminate in a final sculpture incorporating iconic elements from a cross-cultural range of devotional figures. Evoking the auratic



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status of sacred objects and spaces, these works explore the alchemical process by which inanimate things come to be imbued with spiritual significance. While the exhibition adopts a critical stance toward object-worship, Geronimas still prizes craftsmanship and painstakingly hand-makes every sculpture to both embrace and query traditional notions of authorship and artistic genius.

For Nevine Mahmoud's exhibition, several recent sculptures and installations will be brought together for the first time alongside a selection of new works created specifically for the gallery. Mahmoud makes provocative sculptures from glass, steel, resin, and precious stones such as onyx, alabaster, and marble. Her work often takes the form of fruits or body parts, from curvaceous busts to voluptuous cherries. The works' pristine polished surfaces and immaculate pedestals stand in stark contrast to their fleshy volumes and suggest otherworldly, surreal entities. The exhibition will also feature a series of works that connote objects of play. Combining elemental compositions and primary colors with cold, fragile materials, these works frustrate our instinct to touch and explore. The contrast between these childish things and Mahmoud's more sensual objects creates an unsettling effect, inviting us to consider the psychological origins of such bodily impulses as abjection and attraction.

Vanessa McConnell's exhibition will present a selection of recent paintings and works on paper characterized by their thick impasto surfaces and decisive brushstrokes. McConnell creates densely textured abstract compositions by adding multiple layers of acrylic paint, often working until her brush is too heavy with paint to be manipulated. The expressive nature of her mark-making, which sometimes leads to tears and rips in the paper, evinces the artist's powerful compulsion to paint. The exhibition will also feature a selection of ephemera generated by McConnell's distinctive process, including a series of paint-drenched brushes and vessels from the studio, that have acquired a lacquered appearance over time.

Additional support for the exhibition is provided by the Barnsdall Art Park Foundation (BAPF).

**About the Artists**

Lukas Geronimas (b. 1980 in Toronto, Canada, lives and works in Los Angeles, CA). Select solo exhibitions include: *Seminal Echo*, 247365, New York, NY (2016); *Lukas Geronimas LIVE from the Landing*, the Landing, Los Angeles, CA (2016); and *Greatest Show on Rearth*, David Petersen, Minneapolis, MN (2015). Select group exhibitions include: *Strange Attractors: the Anthology of Interplanetary Folk Art*, organized by Bob



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Nickas at Redling Fine Art, Los Angeles, CA (2017); *Commodus Operandi*, Andrew Rafacz, Chicago, IL (2016); *Continuous Surfaces*, Andrea Rosen Gallery 2, New York, NY (2015); *Three Cups Fragrance*, Bodega, New York, NY (2014); *Two and a Half Men*, Cooper Cole, Toronto, Ontario (2014); and *Particular Pictures*, Suzanne Geiss Company, New York, NY (2014).

Nevine Mahmoud (b. 1988, London, lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) received her BA from Goldsmiths, University of London and MFA from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. Her work was recently on view in *The Artist is Present*, curated by Maurizio Cattelan, at the Yuz Museum in Shanghai. Recent group exhibitions include: *Dreamers Awake: Women Artists After Surrealism* at White Cube, London; *The Poet, the Critic and the Missing* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; *MADMOISELLE* at the Centre Régional D'art Contemporain Occitanie in Sète; *This is Presence* at Ballroom Marfa; and *The Lasting Concept* at the Portland Institute of Contemporary Art. Other thematic exhibitions include: *I Had the Landscape in My Arms* at Josh Lilley, London; *An Uncanny Order* at Jessica Silverman, San Francisco; *Debris* at James Fuentes, New York; and *Seven Reeds* at Overduin & Co., Los Angeles. *f o r e p l a y* (2017) at M+B was the artist's debut solo exhibition and was selected as an *Artforum* Critics' Pick. Other notable press includes: *MOUSSE*; *Art Review*; *New York Magazine*; *Los Angeles Times*; and *Contemporary Art Daily*.

Vanessa McConnell (b.1960, Houston, TX, lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) began her practice at the Exceptional Children's Foundation (ECF) Art Centers in 1983 at the MLK studio in South Los Angeles, and now works from the ECF Art Center Westside studio located in Inglewood, CA. The ECF Art Center Westside is one of ECF's five progressive art studios supporting adult artists with developmental disabilities.



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**About the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (LAMAG)**

Established in 1954, the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery is the longest running institution in Los Angeles devoted solely to exhibiting art. The gallery focuses on artists from Los Angeles – in particular underrepresented artists whose work may not otherwise have found a platform. LAMAG’s exhibitions, educational, and public programs aim to inspire conversation about the contemporary issues and ideas that resonate most with the people of Los Angeles.

Many local artists who have exhibited at the gallery have gone on to become fixtures of the international art world, including: Eleanor Antin, John Baldessari, Mark Bradford, Vija Celmins, David Hammons, Barbara Kruger, Kerry James Marshall, Senga Nengudi, Catherine Opie, and Ed Ruscha. Today, the gallery continues to build on this rich legacy, operating as a site of discovery for outstanding work by the city’s most exciting artists, from recent graduates to practitioners with years of experience.

Offering free admission and programs, LAMAG serves as a welcoming space for everyone, regardless of their income level, personal history, ethnicity, sexual orientation, immigration status, religion, or gender identity.

For more information, please visit [lamag.org](http://lamag.org) or find us on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) @LAMAGBarnsdall

**About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)**

As a leading, progressive arts and cultural agency, DCA empowers Los Angeles’s vibrant communities by supporting and providing access to quality visual, literary, musical, performing, and educational arts programming; managing vital cultural centers; preserving historic sites; creating public art; and funding services provided by arts organizations and individual artists.

Formed in 1925, DCA promotes arts and culture as a way to ignite a powerful dialogue, engage LA’s residents and visitors, and ensure LA’s varied cultures are recognized, acknowledged, and experienced. DCA’s mission is to strengthen the quality of life in Los Angeles by stimulating and supporting arts and cultural activities, ensuring public access to the arts for residents and visitors alike.

DCA advances the social and economic impact of arts and culture through: grant-making; public art; community arts; performing arts; and



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strategic marketing, development, design, and digital research. DCA creates and supports arts programming, maximizing relationships with other city agencies, artists, and arts and cultural nonprofit organizations to provide excellent service in neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles.

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