

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Gallery@1GAP, Richard Meier On Prospect Park
One Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn

Gallery hours by appointment
Contact Curator Suzy Spence | spenceprojects.com
info@spenceprojects.com 917-923-3832



Brooklyn Landscape

January 19 - May 5, 2017

Opening Reception Thursday January 19, 6-8PM

The Gallery@1GAP is pleased to present **Rob Stephenson, Susan Hamburger, Kathryn Lynch,** and **Isidro Blasco** in an exhibition about the contemporary Brooklyn landscape. In keeping with 19th Century art critic John Ruskin's concept of "truth to nature", the following artists are a heterogeneous group not inclined to romanticize Brooklyn, but rather present the city's landscape as a place where visual harmony comes together only every so often. Ruskin emphasized the connection between art, society, and nature, in particular he championed painting directly from life rather than developing works in an invented studio setting, seeking art that seemed to be free of any rules of composition. Some of his writings predate the green movement by valuing land preservation and architectural harmony. He believed that architecture should be left to age, free of restoration, so as to display its inevitable changing form, an aesthetic he based on a kind of material truth.

Rob Stephenson's (b. Philadelphia, 1974) photographs of urban agriculture are verdant compositions of city-dwellers farming the small areas of workable land located in vacant lots, roof tops, and small back yards of Brooklyn. Gardens planted in such dense urban settings produce subsistence means, not a commercial crop. But as success stories of nourishment and regeneration, these farming projects are examples of what could take hold to become a larger movement, one in which the urban landscape returns to a state of sustenance. Stephenson's subject matter and composition connect back to painters like Jean Francois Millet, whose *The Gleaners* (1857) in particular, took interest in the labor around food production.

Susan Hamburger's (b. Boston, 1962) installation in the Richard Meier designed building transforms a sleek black and white business setting into a sort of beaux-art drawing room. Hamburger treats the crisply skimmed walls with ornamental details and inlaid pastoral scenes of the fields and monuments of neighboring Prospect Park. By using vinyl decals and trompe-l'oeil painting effects, her faux decorations draw attention to the surface upon which she works, in particular the Modern qualities of purity, harmony, and supremacy that seem baked into the Meier walls. By borrowing an older vernacular of interior decoration, Hamburger explores the vast shifts in taste that have taken place in and around Grand Army Plaza, effectively connecting the bourgeois past with the bourgeois present.

Kathryn Lynch (b. 1961, Philadelphia) works in an Impressionistic painterly style, making spare, wet on wet oil paintings of south Brooklyn neighborhoods. She records the quotidian, changeable views around her: scenes of the Red Hook waterfront, the slushy streets of Cobble Hill, people conversing on park benches, and patterns of car and building lights in a dark sky. Her images don't idealize the city and can feel remarkably familiar, as if one had just witnessed them personally. Her sense of color and light denotes the time of day, the weather, the season, as well as her given mood.

Isidro Blasco's (b. Spain, 1962) photo constructions present landscapes as small, wall based photo maquettes supported by light but complex wooden armatures. His pieces read as precious, almost sentimental memories of a moment in time and space, perhaps the kind most passers-by would dismiss. Blasco's images are pieced together through soft, asymmetrical seams, creating a somewhat precarious or vulnerable architecture. The collaged photographs range from street life to specific subway lines, presenting an ephemeral moment in time. The work is playful and in that sense very accessible, yet it gets at the truth of the urban topography.