

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JEFFREY TEUTON & MEGAN STROECH
if this is as good as it gets, then i guess i'm ok with that

September 16 - October 21, 2017
Opening Reception:
September 16, 2017, 7-9pm

(Chicago - August 10, 2017)

Stuart & Co. Gallery is pleased to announce *if this is as good as it gets, then i guess i'm ok with that*, an exhibition of new works by Jeffrey Teuton and Megan Stroech in collaboration with ROCKELMANN&, Berlin. The exhibition spotlights flaw and dysfunction through a lens of humor and wit from two varying perspectives. Playful mocking of overarching systems of consumerism, patriarchy and class, coupled with codices spawned from personal struggle and tragedy, empowers viewers to unabashedly contemplate social and existential turmoil as well as question the nature of contentment itself. Employing kitsch, cliché, and popular culture as effortlessly as they do shape and color, Stroech and Teuton transform stories too fragile to be spoken into compositions filled with intrigue and gusto.

Jeffrey Teuton, influenced by his past architecture studies as well as Ellsworth Kelly's minimalist works, stacks found objects and colorful shapes like notes composing a symphony or bricks defining a building. Teuton equates this process to memory formation. "I think that when you look at an experience or even your time with a person you have this pattern and these shapes that when put together, the space and arrangements are very telling. Often it is a combination of things that lead to a memory, so the stack is a natural way for that to be expressed," he explains. The candid titles Teuton chooses often have an ironic contrast with the whimsy of his work, shifting the viewer's perceptions until it becomes difficult to tell truth from fiction and comedy from tragedy.

Works such as *Enjoy It While You Have It, Cause It Is Mostly Hard Work and Shitty* illustrate this notion. While a massive pile of brick-colored shapes fill the chasm between two large, ominous objects, the arrangement of miniature stacks in the lower left of the composition jump out in stark contrast. Appearing almost as contemporary cairns, the small stacks of color seem to mark or memorialize some ceremony, path, or burial, perhaps even commemorating the structure constructed to span the gap.

Similarly, *Sunset Over Gas Station, Exit 36, I'm Still Alive, I Am Still Alive* interjects the viewer into a world of unforeseen extremes. With interlinking broad strokes of color consuming the majority of the composition, a slight glimpse of street lights peak through to hint at the storyline encoded in the title. We are left to wonder at the events that took place and whether to be appreciative of what appears to be a peaceful sunset or terrified by a near-death experience.

Teuton was born and raised in Indiana. He graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 2004. He currently lives and works in Indianapolis.

Megan Stroech addresses the relationship of objects to desire, function, and identity, often incorporating mass produced merchandise and faux materials to comment on the role that consumerism plays in society. Fascination with slang, puns, clichés, and malfunction translate effectively into her work through exploring tension between 2D and 3D attributes. "I am particularly interested in the different aspects of failure that occur within the work, whether it be through dysfunction...or failure of representation through gesture in mark-making or construction. The faux versions of luxury items utilized in my work also fail in their imitation of the objects they propose to be. There is often a perceived humor in the failure of these objects, and this humor can be used as an access point," she states.

One such example, *Throw Shade*, loosely reconstructs the form of a window shade and yet, denies it of its function. The brightly colored canvas and sunflower-patterned vinyl is synched with short strings hopelessly out of reach and covering nothing more than the wall. In this manner the object becomes a gimmick and the irony of the title's slang wordplay, set to publicly denounce someone for wronging you, seems to poke fun at the conventions of the art world.

Similarly, Stroech alludes to the barrage of imagery and trending stories that we are exposed to on a daily basis and how they affect notions of self. In the work *Ought Knot* a tablecloth with a repetitive fruit print cut into an oversized bow simultaneously provides a nod to the resurgence of 90's fashion trends implying a longing for times past while also acting as a strong feminine object, relevant most especially to the current political landscape.

Stroech was born in 1986 in Corpus Christi, TX. She received her BFA from the University of Texas at Austin and her MFA in Printmaking from Illinois State University in 2012. She currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Maintaining a contemporary vision, Stuart & Co. Gallery strives to represent emerging and mid-career artists at the forefront of expression. Since its inception in 2012, Stuart & Co. Gallery has been home to innovative, pioneering exhibitions across a multitude of media and genres. The gallery embraces multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and cross-genre art forms in addition to traditional practices.

Please join Stuart & Co. Gallery for the opening reception of *if this is as good as it gets, then i guess i'm ok with that* on Saturday, September 16th, from 7-9pm.

For more information please contact Britney Lipton at (312) 487-1850 or via email at britney.lipton@stuartandco.com.