

# *Set to Manual*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Opening Friday, Oct 23, 2009, 7-10pm

117 NE 2nd Street

Downtown Fort Lauderdale

Open Wednesdays 1-5pm, and other times by appointment

Exhibition on view thru Sept 30, 2010

For more info: [www.girlsclubcollection.org](http://www.girlsclubcollection.org)

## **Third annual exhibition at Girls' Club "Set to Manual" shows its hand**

Once upon a time, contemporary art spectators were required to digest lengthy manifestos and divine obscure subtexts from the flimsiest of art gestures. Today, too-conceptual art is on the wane, as is detached, slick neo-Geometric painting, and art based solely on appropriation of other art. Current art production is rife with obsessive tinkering, elaborate drawing, and one-off handmade technologies. The spare objects of minimalist art have been replaced with rich surfaces, vivid imagery and virtuosic techniques to delight the eye and inspire the imagination.

Opening to the public on Friday, October 23rd, from 7-10pm, Girls' Club in Fort Lauderdale presents *Set to Manual*, an opinionated look at artworks characterized by intense personal manufacture. Works by more than twenty-five artists range from hand-painted animation and hand-altered 16mm film, to pricked paper drawings and artists' books, from free-wheeling collage and assemblage to site-specific installation and more. The works on view in *Set to Manual* were developed and refined by the artists' hand at every stage of creation. Lavish investment in each work by the artist yields a personalized, customized quality that is undeniable. In this era of lightning-fast attention spans, built-in obsolescence and corporate mass manufacture permeating every aspect of our daily lives, art made by hand is a welcome invitation to the overloaded spectator. *Set to Manual* asks us to slow down our span of attention, to become aware of the nuances visible in the works on view, and to be rewarded in the process.

Occupying two levels of Girls' Club's architect-designed space, *Set to Manual* shares with the public works by artists of international renown, such as Vija Celmins, Cornelia Parker, Kiki Smith and Jessica Stockholder, as well as up and coming South Florida artists Rosemarie Chiarlone, Pepe Mar and Jen Stark. By exhibiting emerging artists in the context of those more established, Girls' Club exposes them to a wider audience and nurtures the careers of artists in our region, a burgeoning art center.

Two modes of artistic practice vie in *Set to Manual*. There are some artists whose intensity is fueled by quiet precision, even restraint. Vija Celmins, Tara Donovan, Carol Prusa and Michelle Segre steadily build their visual fields with astonishing draftsmanship and elaborate detail. Rosemarie Chiarlone, Ellen Gallagher and Amparo Sard have each developed a vocabulary of subtle mark-making by pricking the surface of paper, a procedure that provokes associations with the vulnerability of skin.

Other works are boisterous, their colors and textures overflowing boundaries to fill their spaces and complicate their surfaces. Gean Moreno's trance-inducing collages are visual overloads that swell to immense proportions. Beatriz Monteavaro, Arlene Berrie and Jeni Spota lavishly deconstruct heroes, saints and monster figures using high-key hues and layered impasto paint. Pepe Mar premieres an installation work created especially in response to Girls' Club's unique interior.

Younger artists who rebel against the homogenization of art and life can look to pioneers Nancy Spero and Kiki Smith, whose works are on view. Spero married her signature hand-printing technology with texts applied to

paper using typewriters of varying sizes. Her room-sized narratives express outrage at the oppression of women throughout history, as well as mythologize female heroines. Kiki Smith restored a sense of play and magic to figurative art via the use of craft technologies.

Many of these handmade resources have always been available to artists, but were dismissed since the pop and conceptual art movements decided to embrace the machine and remove the artist's hand. Today, we are witnessing a return to custom-made technologies, an embrace of craft. Needlework, intimately scaled hand sculpted works, quirky and sensual painting styles are in vogue. Imagine the "automatic" switched off, presenting Set to Manual.

### **Set to Manual Video Program**

The moving image invites experimentation in a fluid medium. The Set to Manual video program includes Yui Kugimiya's paintings that move, Dinorah de Jesus Rodriguez' scratched and distressed found film works, Pipilotti Rist's deliberately distorted video footage, and Clifton Childree's *She Sank on Shallow Bank*, in which the filmmaker acts as both puppet master and cartoonist, taking the audience through a series of balletic illusions.

### **Set to Manual Web Project**

On Girls' Club's website, Miami artist Felice Grodin has created a web-based project derived from her complex, layered drawings of pseudo architectural spaces.

### **Set to Manual Events**

Check back with Girls' Club for information on events to be scheduled during the course of Set to Manual. Artists in Action! is a series of presentations by local artists that offer the public an intimate view into their practices and processes. Local artists will talk, demonstrate, or lead workshops for the public on evenings and weekends. Girls' Club will release a unique, affordable limited edition multiple designed by each artist at every event. The Girls' Club multiples are an introduction to the experience of art collecting for the average consumer. Collect them all! Proceeds from the sale of these objects are directly applied to offset costs of Girls' Club education programming for women and girls.

*Girls' Club* exhibitions are free and open to the public, on view for a full year. In addition to works from the collection, *Girls' Club* presents works borrowed from other private collections, from galleries, and directly from artists' studios, in order to share with the public many relevant works yet to be acquired by a museum or presented in a gallery or other venue.

### **About Girls' Club**

Founded in 2006 by artist Francie Bishop Good and her husband David Horvitz, *Girls' Club* is a 501(C)3 foundation and alternative space, the only private collection in the world dedicated to exhibiting contemporary art by women. Cutting edge works in painting, drawing, photography and video are presented in curated, thematic exhibitions which also include works loaned from other collectors, and from galleries and artists. Artists represented in the Good/Horvitz collection are a diverse body of women - and some men - representing many ethnicities and nationalities. The programming of *Girls' Club* is designed by founder Francie Bishop Good and Creative Director Michelle Weinberg, with input from collaborators and curators who lend their special expertise. *Girls' Club's* facility is a dynamic, multi-functional building designed by award-winning designer Margi Nothard of Glavovic Studio in Fort Lauderdale.

*Girls' Club's* mission is to educate the public, nurture the careers of female artists, and to serve as a resource for art students and scholars, curators, and practicing artists. A special commitment is made to expose the work of local artists to a broader national and international audience. *Girls' Club's* website features a comprehensive online artist database with biographical information and relevant web links on artists in the collection, facilitating further study on the works and careers of contemporary women artists. Web projects by artists, interviews and texts by writers and a blog extends the presence of *Girls' Club* onto the worldwide web.

*Girls' Club* is committed to changing the lives of individuals in Broward County, and our programming reflects the special needs of women and girls. *Girls' Club* partners with *Women in Distress of Broward County*, the *Susan B. Anthony Recovery Center*, *Women on the Rise* (a program of the *Museum of Contemporary Art* in North Miami), *Young at Art Museum* and the *Pace Center for Girls*, designing specialized workshops in digital imaging and multi-media. *Girls' Club* also offers artist-led technical and professional development workshops for practicing artists in subjects such as alternative printmaking methods and handmade 16mm film.

**Artists in Set to Manual**

(selected high resolution images are available)

Arlene Berrie  
Vija Celmins  
Rosemarie Chiarlone  
Clifton Childree  
Tara Donovan  
Ellen Gallagher  
Felice Grodin  
Arturo Herrera  
Yui Kugimiya  
Pepe Mar  
Annette Messenger  
Beatriz Monteavaro  
Gean Moreno  
Cornelia Parker  
Kerry Phillips  
Carol Prusa  
Elaine Reichek  
Pipilotti Rist  
Dinorah de Jesus Rodriguez  
Rosanna Saccoccio  
Amparo SARD  
Michelle Segre  
Kiki Smith  
Nancy Spero  
Jeni Spota  
Jen Stark  
Sara Stites  
Jessica Stockholder  
Paula Wilson