

FRIDMAN GALLERY

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A Mauve Bird with Yellow Teeth Red Feathers Green Feet and a Rose Belly, 2015, Watermill Center. Photograph by Matt Grub.

TAMAR ETTUN

Alula in Blue

September 19 – October 24, 2015

Opening reception: Saturday, September 19, 6-8pm

A catalog, with essays by Claire Barliant and Natasha Marie Llorens, will accompany the exhibition.

Alula: the process of a bird's wing corresponding to the thumb and bearing a few short quills — called also *bastard wing*. Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2015.

Fridman Gallery is pleased to present *Alula In Blue*, the first solo exhibition with the gallery by Tamar Ettun, incorporating sculpture, performative installation and video. This new body of work centers on expressing primal empathy, a bodily impulse beyond or before intellectualization.

Ettun's sculptures and performances reflect her vision of movement and stillness, temporality and permanence. Working to invert this duality, Ettun creates durational performances that incorporate stillness, and sculptures that capture gestural movements. Each gesture is suspended. Each object performs a task: an immense inflatable bubble is squashed between the gallery's columns; a series of limbs grip found objects, creating horizontal totems.

The duality present in Ettun's practice – movement/stillness, functionality/abstractness – applies to relationships between objects and movers, and between the viewer and the work. Mirror neurons are said to be responsible for empathy; we are capable of feeling another's suffering so viscerally, that it becomes our own. "I see stillness as an expression of trauma that is repetitive and unchangeable. Trauma damages the ability of an individual to feel empathy towards the other." When movement replaces stillness, and objects acquire new meanings, viewers are enticed to empathize with the work as a metaphor for the world at large. Like a bird's alula lifting its flight, interaction with Ettun's installations and performances elevates our spirit.

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Ettun's works are a formal investigation of materials and the visceral world. She breaks apart and assembles objects that would not normally be combined, which creates unique and transformative pieces that evoke abstracted narratives. Ettun sources discarded commodities that have specific functional use and constructs new assemblages, stripping the original objects of their familiar meanings. The resulting sculptures resemble futuristic creatures that have evolved organically and bonded like groups of dancers or lines of poetry.

The video featured in the exhibition is the first part (Blue) of a video and performance tetralogy – *Mauve Bird with Yellow Teeth Red Feathers Green Feet and a Rose Belly* – choreographed by the artist and performed with members of The Moving Company, the performance group she founded in 2013. A new installment will premiere each year until the completion of the project in 2018. Each part will be based on a color and season – Blue/Winter, Red/Spring, Yellow/Summer, Orange/Fall – and will incorporate an abstracted narrative of absurd physical tasks performed by movers interacting with objects.

The program of events accompanying the exhibition includes:

Discussion Panel on the relationship between sculpture and performance moderated by Steven Henry Madoff with artists Tamar Ettun, Jessica Segall, Molly Lowe and Deville Cohen: Thursday, September 24, 7pm.

Workshop “Find Your Spirit Animal” with Shaman Itzhak Beery: Thursday, October 8, 7pm.

Performances by The Moving Company members: Friday, October 23, 7pm.

New pieces created individually by members of The Moving Company in response to the exhibition. With Maia Karo, Tina Wang, Rebecca Pristoop, Sabrina Shapiro, Mor Mendel, Laura Bernstein, Tyler Patterson, Asher Mones.

Work in the exhibition was created with support from The Watermill Center and Fountainhead Residency.

Tamar Ettun (b.1982, Jerusalem) is a Brooklyn based sculptor and performance artist. She is the founder and director of The Moving Company. Ettun received her MFA from Yale University in 2010 where she was awarded the Alice English Kimball Fellowship. She studied at Cooper Union in 2007, while earning her BFA from Bezalel Academy. Her numerous exhibitions and performances include: The Watermill Center, Vanity Projects, e-flux, Transformer, NADA NYC, Madison Square Park, Braverman Gallery, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Andrea Meislin Gallery, PERFORMA 11, PERFORMA 09. Ettun has been honored by many organizations, including Franklin Furnace, Iaspis, The Pollock Krasner, Fountainhead Residency, The Watermill Center, MacDowell Fellowship, Abrons Arts Center, The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Art Production Fund, Socrates Sculpture Park, Artis, RECESS, and Triangle Arts Association. Ettun is currently working towards a solo show at the Uppsala Museum of Art that will open in 2016.

For press inquiries, a schedule of performances and reservations, please write to us at info@fridmangallery.com.