

OCTAVIA

ART GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Between Memory and Myth: Brittany Fanning, Luke Forsyth, Bradley Kerl, & Ransome

August 1 – September 26, 2026

Opening Reception: Saturday, August 1, 6 – 9 pm

**During Fidelity White Linen Night*

Between Memory and Myth brings together the work of Brittany Fanning, Luke Forsyth, Bradley Kerl, and Ransome to examine how contemporary painting moves between lived experience and imaginative reconstruction. Rather than documenting the world as it is, each artist uses memory, observation, and personal or cultural history as material that is reshaped through the act of painting. Fanning and Forsyth draw from everyday environments, creating scenes that blur the line between direct observation and psychological narrative. Kerl combines references to memory, art history, and abstraction to explore how images change through time and perception, while Ransome layers collage and painting to connect cultural memory, ancestry, and collective histories. Together, these four practices reflect the exhibition's central idea: the space between memory and myth, where experience is never fixed but continually edited, reinterpreted, and imagined. The exhibition considers painting not simply as a record of reality, but as a process through which meaning is constructed, revealing how personal and collective histories are shaped as much by imagination as by recollection.

Brittany Fanning is a painter known for her vibrant figurative works that blend humor, beauty, and psychological tension. Drawing from personal experiences spanning the American Southeast, South Korea, and Southern California, Fanning creates richly detailed narrative scenes in which idyllic moments are subtly disrupted by elements of danger, absurdity, or unease. Her paintings often depict solitary figures inhabiting lush landscapes and carefully composed interiors, inviting viewers into worlds that are both alluring and psychologically complex. Through bold color, meticulous composition, and a distinctive balance of humor and suspense, Fanning explores themes of resilience, escapism, and the fragile relationship between comfort and vulnerability. Drawing on influences from travel, personal experience, and contemporary culture, her work transforms everyday moments into compelling visual narratives that reflect the contradictions and anxieties of contemporary life. Fanning recently relocated from Los Angeles to New York and was born in Florida. She earned her BFA from the University of North Georgia. She has had solo exhibitions at Mindy Solomon (Miami); Heliconia Projects (Dominican Republic); Steve Turner (Los Angeles); The Lodge (Los Angeles); and Galerie BHAK (Seoul), Ochi Gallery (CA & ID), and Megan Mulrooney Gallery (NY), among others as well as works in numerous private collections.

Luke Forsyth is a painter and illustrator whose vibrant, layered works explore the relationship between observation, memory, and imagination. Drawing inspiration from California landscapes, domestic interiors, floral arrangements, and the visual rhythms of everyday life, Forsyth transforms familiar subjects into richly textured compositions that are both playful and contemplative. Working across painting, drawing, and mixed media, he employs bold color, flattened perspectives, and dynamic mark-making to create scenes that blur the boundaries between reality and invention. Through a practice rooted in curiosity, experimentation, and storytelling, he invites viewers to discover moments of wonder within the ordinary. Forsyth is based in Los Angeles and is a graduate of Humboldt State University. He has exhibited widely throughout the nation, and his work is held in numerous public and private collections, including the Cedars-Sinai Collection and the Fidelity Investment Art Collection.

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Bradley Kerl creates paintings that merge lived experience, memory, and invention, transforming familiar subjects into images that balance the recognizable with the uncanny. Drawing inspiration from everyday encounters, personal archives, vernacular imagery, and art history, his work explores how meaning shifts through context, layering, and perception. While rooted in representation, his paintings are conceived through an abstract sensibility, built through processes of collage, experimentation, and revision that reward close looking with hidden details and embedded narratives. Influenced by painters such as Peter Doig, David Hockney, and Alex Katz, Kerl navigates the space between tradition and innovation, embracing the handmade qualities of painting while responding to contemporary life. His recent work reflects on themes of duality, transition, and transformation, beauty and danger, creation and destruction, certainty, and ambiguity. The works are informed by personal upheaval, relocation, and an ongoing fascination with the ways images, symbols, and memories evolve over time. Kerl was born in Texas and lives in New Orleans. He received an MFA from the University of Houston, Texas. He has had national and international solo exhibitions at McClain Gallery (TX), Jonathan Hopson Gallery (TX), NADA Project Space (NY), the Beeville Art Museum (TX), among others.

Ransome's work explores the intersections of personal memory, cultural history, and collective identity through vibrant paintings and mixed-media collages. Drawing from his African American lineage and family histories rooted in the American South and the Great Migration, he creates layered visual narratives that connect intimate experiences with broader social, racial, and historical realities. Combining acrylic paint with found, handmade, and reclaimed materials, Ransome transforms everyday objects into powerful symbols of resilience, resourcefulness, and cultural inheritance. Influenced by the improvisational rhythms of jazz and hip-hop, as well as the traditions of quilting and storytelling, his work balances figuration and abstraction to create images that are both deeply personal and universally resonant. Through color, pattern, and layered symbolism, Ransome honors the struggles, triumphs, and enduring spirit of Black communities while inviting viewers to reflect on the histories that continue to shape contemporary life. Ransome was born in North Carolina and is based in New York. He earned a BFA from Pratt Institute and an MFA from Lesley University. His work has been exhibited extensively throughout the United States and is recognized for its layered visual narratives that draw upon African American history, Southern traditions, and personal storytelling.