

KATE WERBLE GALLERY

83 VANDAM STREET NEW YORK, NY 10013

LEX BROWN: *THEY FLEW TO PLANET NOVA*
KATY COWAN: *THE BLUE SUN MOANS*
JANUARY 15 – MARCH 7, 2020

Kate Werble Gallery introduces the first in a series of two-person exhibitions: *Lex Brown: They Flew to Planet Nova* and *Katy Cowan: The Blue Sun Moans*.

The 9 colored pencil drawings that comprise Lex Brown's *They Flew to Planet Nova* map a psychogeography of the Northern Virginia suburbs, a region shaped by its technology, national security, and defense companies and the place where Brown grew up. In her works, Brown draws upon Northern Virginia's McMansion mishmash of Neocolonial architectural styles, a grand banality that acts as the neutral face of a seat of international imperial power and one of the world's largest data center markets. In Brown's pictured landscapes, columns and edifices are shown in dramatic perspective. They reveal buildings speaking in blocked letters and supporting poems on their slanted roofs. Presenting a suburban landscape that feels at once contemporary and science fiction, Brown questions where memory—social and cultural, institutional and colonial, corporeal and psychological—might be stored and found. The works in this exhibition consider how the conformity of our built environments, the houses we grow up in and the streets through which we drive, construct our sense of self and embodied experiences.

In *The Blue Sun Moans*, Katy Cowan's 6 cast aluminum wall hanging sculptures take the associative and material qualities of rope as their prompt. Reconfigured and recomposed, this familiar object reveals a plethora of new associations. Cowan's material interest in objects and tools of work, such as hammers and two-by-fours, intersects in this new body of work with her attention to the mutability of color and light. Her sculptures are produced via a casting process that echoes the traditional production of rope, in which the twisting together of fibers, yarns, and strands into a single form gives it its tensile strength. Cast whole in aluminum and painted with enamels and oils, Cowan's works unhinge their source material from its usual function and straddle the categories of painting, sculpture, and drawing. The exhibition's title borrows from a line in a poem written by SJ Cowan and draws upon the referential affinities of the artist's chosen materials, which spill across landscapes both earthly and imaginary.

Lex Brown (b. 1989, Oakland, CA) grew up in Northern Virginia and attended Princeton University for her A.B. in visual art and archaeology where she graduated *summa cum laude*. She completed her M.F.A. at the Yale University sculpture program in 2017. Brown has performed and exhibited work at the New Museum, the High Line, the International Center of Photography, Recess, and The Kitchen in New York; REDCAT Theater and The Hammer Museum in Los Angeles; The Baltimore Museum of Art in Baltimore; and at the Munch Museum in Oslo, Norway. *Consciousness, a survey of Brown's work spanning the past 8 years, is newly available from GenderFail. Her first paperback work in fiction, My Wet Hot Drone Summer, a sci-fi erotic novella that takes on surveillance and social justice, is available online.*

Katy Cowan (b. 1982, Lake Geneva, WI) received her BFA from University of Puget Sound in 2004 and her MFA from Otis College of Art and Design in 2014. Cowan's work was the subject of a solo exhibition *Reflected-Into-Themselves-Into-Reflected*, at the Lynden Sculpture Garden (Milwaukee, WI). She has been featured in exhibitions at University of Puget Sound (Tacoma, WA), Madison Museum of Contemporary Art (Madison, WI), Synchrotron Radiation Center: Home of Aladdin (Stoughton, WI), Poor Farm (Manawa, WI), Philip Martin Gallery (Los Angeles, CA), Green Gallery (Milwaukee, WI), Kate Werble Gallery (New York, NY), and Fourteen30 Contemporary (Portland, OR). Cowan's work is in public and private collections such as the Minneapolis Museum of Art (Minneapolis, MN), Lynden Sculpture Garden (Milwaukee, WI), Art in Embassies (Maputo, Mozambique) and Northwestern Mutual Insurance. Cowan lives and works in Berkeley, CA.

Upcoming two-person gallery exhibitions: Chris Domenick and Kevin Ford (March 12 – April 25); David Alekhuogie and Ander Mikalson (April 30 – June 13).