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## Love Action Art Lounge



**January 28, 2017 – May 7, 2017**

“Love Action Art Lounge” is a group exhibition of works that are generated from or encourage convivial social scenes, freedom of expression, and interpersonal connectivity. Through installations inspired by underground music clubs, written scores that instruct audiences, performed celebratory rituals, and videos that simultaneously world-build and critique existing sociopolitical systems, “Love Action Art Lounge” becomes its own hang out space that reflects the people-positive, aspirational, and, at times transgressive, attributes of its artists and collectives.

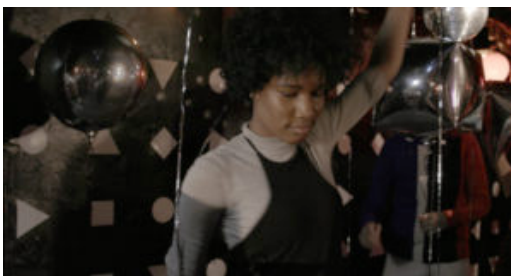
Curated by Franklin Street Works’ Creative Director, Terri C Smith, the exhibition will be on view from January 28 – May 7, 2017. Exhibiting Artists: Chloë Bass, Katie Cercone, Go!PushPops, Elisa Garcia de la Huerta, Riley Hooker, House of Ladosha, Carmelle Safdie, Christopher Udemezue, and Laura Weyl. The exhibition will also include a commissioned event with Bruce High Quality Foundation University on March 25th as well as educational programming throughout the exhibition. “Love Action Art Lounge” is supported by a generous two-year grant from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and with support from Connecticut Office of the Arts.

Social connections as the starting point for collectively creating art is at the core of House of Ladosha and Go!PushPops practices. For House of Ladosha camaraderie and interactions at art school, parties and clubs inspired them to make music and videos that foreground performance, social and/or media critique, queerness and play. The collective is also engaged in ideas around micro-realities, creating family or “sisterhooding,” and being your own hero. In a Brooklyn Rail interview, HLD member Neon Christina adds, “As the comfortable become a little agitated and the powers that be grip at what they can control – queer, black/ brown, and femme people especially will continue to take on the heaviest weight of this political landscape. More now than ever we have to become the armor of our own protection against the tyranny of hate, capitalism and the police state. Our own imagined superheroes.” “Love Action Art Lounge” will feature three videos created by House of Ladosha along with two works by individual members commissioned for the show – a takeaway poster by Riley Hooker and a photograph by Christopher Udemezue.



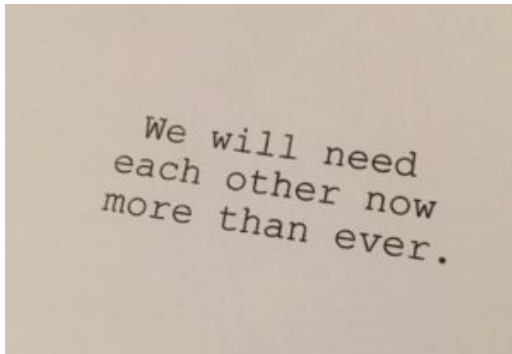
Go!PushPops is self described as, “a radical, transnational queer feminist art collective... [that] employs the female body ... in tactical, ideological strategy.” Their practice includes, performances in the public sphere, art and movement workshops, parades and other participatory actions that encourage peace, sustainability, sex-positivity, gender fluidity, and love, while critiquing patriarchy, war, and systems of power. “Love Action Art Lounge” will include videos of the collective’s past performances, textiles used in performances, and photos of the collective taken by Laura Weyl. There will also be two videos on view made individually by Go!PushPops members Katie Cercone and Elisa Garcia de la Huerta. As part of the exhibition programming, Go! Push Pops has organized a hip hop yoga CHAKRA workshop for youth of Stamford in collaboration with UNDAKOVA, which will culminate in a live-action performance as a kinetic sculpture embodying the rainbow of chakras and the celestial serpent of consciousness.

Two projects in “Love Action Art Lounge” – one by Chloë Bass and one by Carmelle Safdie – encourage visitors to connect socially through real, fictitious, and/or hybrid situations that include prompts and immersive design. Carmelle Safdie’s “Nightlife Design” project navigates from architectural proposals to pop music, imagining idealized spaces for collective audio-visual engagement. This ongoing project was inspired by the artist’s reflection on her communal creative experience as a musician and a desire to establish a utopian space for such social expressivity. In her 2016 music video, “Discovery of The Shape,” she uses interior design — created as part of an artist residency at a New York City bar — as the stage for a fabricated party where her friends perform various roles in a nightclub scene. At Franklin Street Works, the video is installed amidst sculptural lounge furniture, and its original dance track activates a full-scale prototype for a light-up dance floor. Additional components include drawings that sequence through the patterning of dance floor lights and a new series of phosphorescent paintings that translate these sequences into a gridded system.



“Love Action Art Lounge” will also include a score-based, interactive installation by Chloë Bass, which includes a test kitchen installation that directly interfaces with the daily workings of Franklin Street Works’ café. The project is one of several Bass has created to connect people via performance scores and food. “The project,” says Bass, “is designed to question intimacy in one-on-one relationships. The kitchen will serve as a gathering and decompression space in contrast to

the more 'party' aspects of the exhibition." The project includes text prompts printed on café cups, napkins, and plastic cutlery that encourage interconnection, safe place making, and solidarity via phrases such as, "We make sense of things by being together," and "We need each other more than ever." For the exhibition, Café goers will pick up their printed cups in the gallery as part of making their order at the café.



While all of the exhibiting artists in "Love Action Art Lounge" approach the social from distinct and varied perspectives, they, arguably, share what Yates McKee, the author of *Strike Art: Contemporary Art and the Post-Occupy Condition*, describes, when writing about Occupy Wall Street, as "...a horizontal pedagogical space in which viewers themselves might be prompted to imagine and perhaps eventually enact their own sense of social transformation." While this exhibition has a celebratory and social tone, it is not escapist in its intentions. In keeping with Chloë Bass's statement, "When I make art, it's not a balm or a distraction. It's an invitation to come closer," "Love Action Art Lounge" explores how ecstatic actions and supportive, accepting prompts can set the stage for personal expression and, through a caring social space, spark interest in learning about each other and expanding our common ground.

#### **Exhibiting Artists**

Chloë Bass, Katie Cercone, Go!PushPops, Elisa Garcia de la Huerta, Riley Hooker, House of Ladosha, Carmelle Safdie, Christopher Udemezue, and Laura Weyl

#### **Exhibition Curators**

Terri C Smith