

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 October 14, 2014

Inman Gallery is pleased to present:

Angela Fraleigh
Ghosts in the Sunlight

October 25, 2014 – January 4, 2015

Opening Reception:
 Saturday October 25th
 5:00 – 7:00 pm

*Gallery hours: Tues. – Sat., 11 – 6
 and by appointment*



Angela Fraleigh, *something has already started to live in you that will live longer than the sun (detail)* 2014
 oil, galkyd, acrylic, gouache and graphite on canvas
 66 x 84 inches

Inman Gallery is pleased to present *Ghosts in the Sunlight*, a new body of work by **Angela Fraleigh** spanning both galleries. This will be Fraleigh's fourth solo show with Inman, opening Saturday, October 25th with a reception from 5 to 7 pm, and continuing through January 3, 2015. The artist will give an informal gallery walkthrough beginning at 5pm.

The myths underpinning Angela Fraleigh's most recent paintings are rooted in desire, but as basic as that impulse may be, it isn't simple. Desire is a component of admiration and love as well as covetousness and overindulgence. Fraleigh's sources – tales from antiquity of pursuit and abduction – illustrate the charged complexity of wanting: wanting something beautiful, wanting to be ravished, wanting to ravish. Europa was at first charmed, then terrified, by the bull (Zeus in disguise) that carried her off. One glimpse of Diana bathing earned Actaeon a brutal death, delivered by his own dogs. Violence and hunting play natural counterparts to lust and seduction, as in the allegorical boar hunt that frames Meleager's courting of Atalanta.

The fraught sensuality of these stories has been compounded, over the years, by their representation. The women in Fraleigh's paintings are originally from paintings by Baroque and Rococo masters such as Jacob Jordaens, Francois Boucher and Francois Lemoyne. These were artists whose great themes were pleasure, beauty and abundance; hints of refusal, fear or coercion would only spoil the party. So in Boucher's *The Rape of Europa*, Europa is serene and acquiescent perched atop her abductor. Elsewhere, we the viewers sit in for Actaeon, free to enjoy the sight of a naked Diana without fear of reprisal. The original myths, licentious as they may have been, are here replaced with myths even more unlikely and, in their way, more domineering: affirmations of total compliance and availability, of fulfilled desires and uncontested supremacy.

Fraleigh's work lifts these women (and they are almost exclusively women) out of their assigned roles and resettles them in less limited surroundings. One-time attendants, bathers or symbols of fertility now inhabit abstract fields of color. Swaths of oil paint and screens of gold leaf

obscure their bodies. Free of context, of narrative constraints, of salacious bulls and leering satyrs, they are less iconic and more human. Their glances and gestures take on a confidential manner no longer accessible to the viewer. Their desires turn inward. But even stripped of history painting's theatrical and symbolic conventions, Fraleigh's canvases retain their monumental scale and physicality. Voluptuous bodies give way to voluptuous paint. The violence of the old myths is sublimated into whirls of layered and saturated color. If Fraleigh is building a utopia for these women, it's Amazonian, not pastoral, full of a vigor and potential that keeps their newfound intimacy grand.

Is it possible to restore autonomy to these models, to whatever nuances of expression might've been contained in their poses? Maybe it can't be "restored" – they're long gone – but it can be conceived afresh. Fraleigh's paintings are reinventions more than corrections, assertions that those myths of control are in fact just myths, and that new truths can be found by pushing the images further into fantasy, not back toward their origins. Fraleigh takes the title of her exhibition from a short essay by Truman Capote describing his eerie feeling of doubled reality as he watched *In Cold Blood* being filmed. A movie based on his book based on a real-life murder should've sapped the story of its authenticity, but that isn't what Capote experienced: "Reflected reality is the essence of reality, the truer truth... I had chosen my details from life, while [the director] had distilled his from my book: reality twice transposed, and all the truer for it." Fraleigh's painting is itself an act of distillation, boiling off the extravagance and iconography of her sources in pursuit of more delicate, less definite, but perhaps truer relationships.

Angela Fraleigh was born in Beaufort, SC and raised in rural New York State. She graduated with an MFA from Yale University, then spent two years in Houston as a Core Artist in Residence. Her solo exhibitions include University of the Arts Gallery in Philadelphia (2011), PPOW Gallery in New York (2008) and James Harris Gallery in Seattle (2007). Her work has been included in group shows such as *Learning by Doing: 25 Years of The Core Program at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston*, and *Phantasmania* at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, among others. She was nominated for the Louis Comfort Tiffany Award as well as the Joan Mitchell Foundation Award, and was a 2012 Artist in Residence at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha, NE. She currently lives and works in Allentown, PA, where she teaches at Moravian College.



Angela Fraleigh, *Ghosts in the Sunlight*, 2014
oil and metal leaf on canvas, 90 x 66 inches

For more information, please contact the gallery at 713.526.7800 or info@inmangallery.com