

ERIN MORRISON

THE LETDOWN

OCTOBER 28 – DECEMBER 9, 2017

Ochi Projects is pleased to present *The Letdown* by Los Angeles-based artist Erin Morrison. The exhibition is on view from October 28 – December 9, 2017 with an opening reception Saturday, October 28, 6-9pm.

This presentation of relief sculptures made in complementary pairs, created by Morrison's unique process combining both printmaking and casting techniques, brings to the forefront a conversation between artifact and replica. Referencing Etruscan frescoes, early Puritan Gravestones, and more directly the gestures of Gian Lorenzo Bernini's dynamic figurative works, Morrison recasts these symbols with the industrial material of gypsum cement, alluding to the way artifacts are imitated if not outright looted — their original purpose and significance lost or misinterpreted. Through this process of dislocation, artifacts or replicas often take on a new kind of cultural significance where their possession and display is meant to indicate status and wealth.

Do these objects that imitate artifacts become kitsch when a "faux" material meant to imply this sense of value fails to do so? Imitation gold and silver, for instance, are often employed in this effort and are featured predominantly in the exhibition. Recalling a piece of jewelry Morrison had in the 90s, two large panels depict evil eye chains in gold and silver leaf. The evil eye, originally a talisman considered to have magical powers of protection, is depicted with broken links, revealing its artificiality, refuting its symbolic properties and transforming it into a cheap trinket.

Morrison further mines this moment of failed expectation. *The Letdown*, sharing their title with the exhibition, are two panels of milky-colored recurring wave patterns. The works are named after the physiological response that occurs during breastfeeding; the letdown involves the release of oxytocin (the "love" hormone) strengthening the bond of mother to child. The works recall a memory of simultaneously experiencing the letdown breastfeeding her son while feeling extreme despair watching Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign concession speech. This bittersweet moment triggered a heightened awareness of injustice so profound that it called her to action, altering her sense of place and duty in the world. Turning the waves into gilded flames, she carries this experience of complicated emotion into *Ecstasy*, two panels depicting gesturing hands. Though hands are a repeated trope in Morrison's work, here they specifically reference Bernini's *The Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*. Teresa, (one of the few female saints) accounted to have experienced a love of God with a pain "so great, that it made me moan; and yet so surpassing was the sweetness of this excessive pain, that I could not wish to be rid of it." This conflation of the body's letdown while feeling emotionally let down, waves of euphoria and waves of pain, inform Morrison's understanding of high and low, unmet expectation, false narrative, and the power of imagery and symbolic gesture.

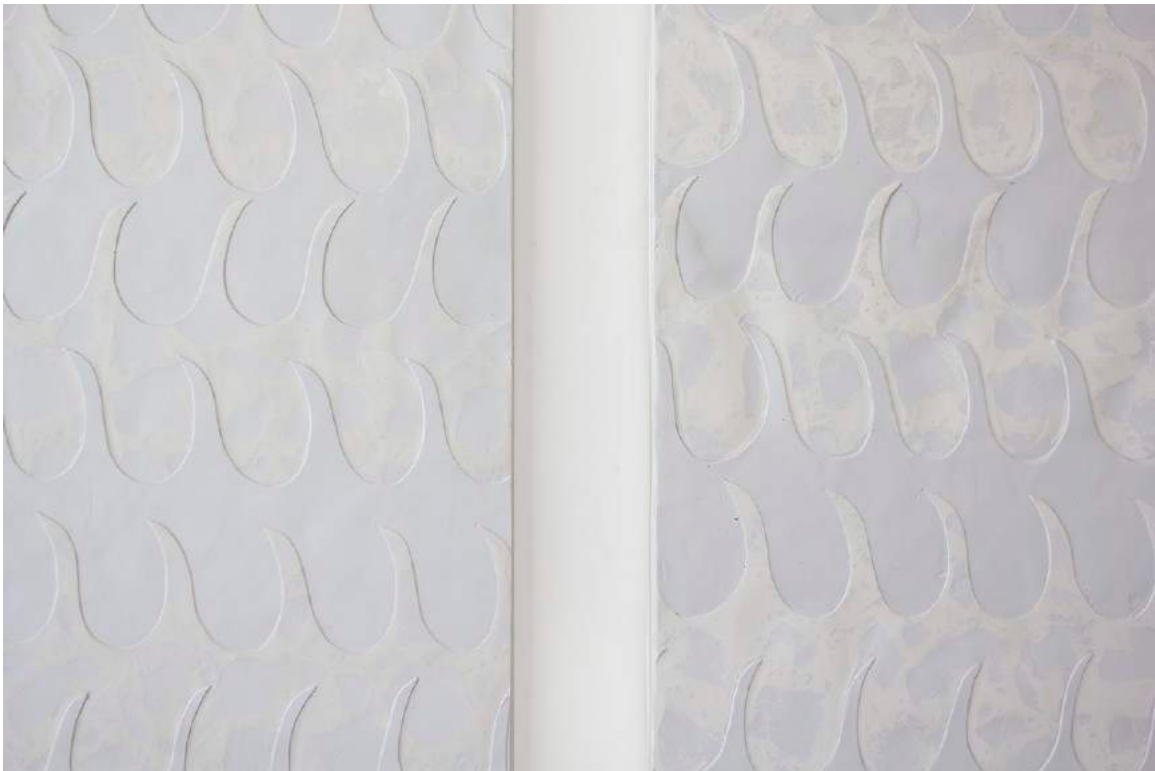
Despite the cynicism required to grasp the concept of kitsch, Morrison nevertheless strives for a level of repose in her pieces. In two final panels Morrison recreates a souvenir pendant that depicts a landscape. She recognizes that while it may have sentimental value it is not a piece of fine jewelry. Interrogating and transforming the souvenir into art object through her labor-intensive process, Morrison seeks a sincere means of making something well-crafted and whole.

Erin Morrison (b. 1985) received her MFA from University of California, Los Angeles in 2014. Her relief paintings have been included in several recent group exhibitions including Sonia Dutton, New York, The Pit, Los Angeles, C.E.S, Los Angeles, Chimento Contemporary, Los Angeles, Samuel Freeman, Los Angeles, UPFOR, Portland, and James Harris Gallery, Seattle.



The Letdown, 2017
Enamel on gypsum cement
87 x 33.5 inches (each panel)







Eye Chain, Gold, 2017
enamel and metal leaf on gypsum cement
46.25 x 73 inches





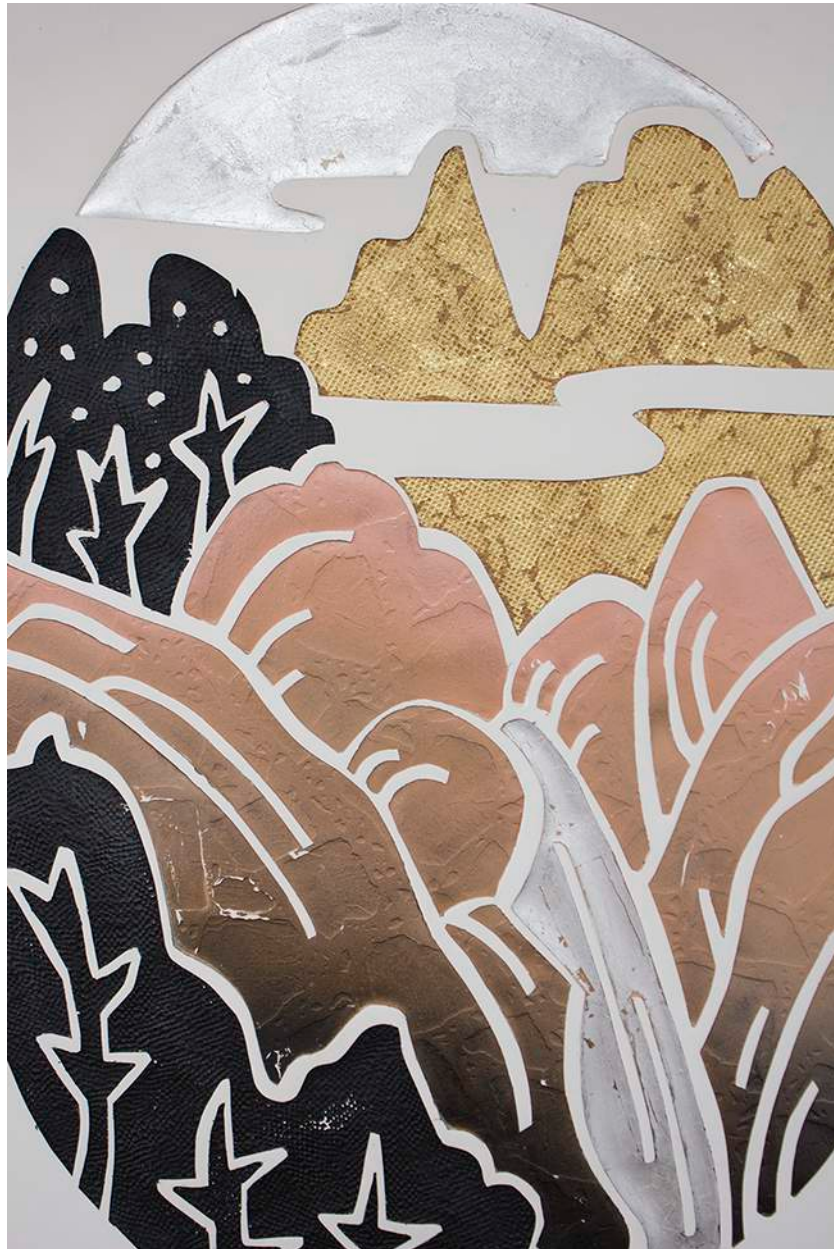
Eye Chain (Silver), 2017
Enamel and metal leaf on gypsum cement
46 x 72.75 inches





Landscape Pendant 1, 2017
Enamel and metal leaf on gypsum cement
41 x 53.5 inches







Landscape Pendant, 2, 2017
Enamel, metal leaf and resin on gypsum cement
41 x 53.5 inches







Ecstasy 1, 2017
Enamel and metal leaf on gypsum cement
32.5 x 32.5 inches





Ecstasy 2, 3017
Enamel on gypsum cement
41 x 53.5 inches





Fortune's Fool, 2017
Enamel on gypsum cement
28.75 x 28.5 inches



ERIN COLLEEN MORRISON

Born 1985, Little Rock, Arkansas
Living and working in Los Angeles

EDUCATION

2014 MFA Painting UCLA
2006 BFA Memphis College of Art

EXHIBITIONS (SOLO AND TWO-PERSON)

2017

The Letdown, Ochi Projects, Los Angeles
When the Fire Burns Out: Chimento Contemporary, Los Angeles

2016

Object Decorum: Ochi Gallery, Ketchum, Idaho (August) 2015
Relief: Samuel Freeman Gallery, Los Angeles

EXHIBITIONS (GROUP)

2016

End of Summer Summer Show, 24 Hour Charlies, Malibu
A Plot of Land, Dutton Gallery, New York
Memory Theater: Sriyon Chowdhury, Upfor Gallery, Portland
Deep Superficial Perceptions, CES Gallery, Los Angeles

2015

XX, Subliminal Projects, Los Angeles
When the Sun Hits, THE PIT, Los Angeles
One Foot on the Ground, James Harris Gallery, Seattle
LadyGirlyFemale, Hammock Gallery, Los Angeles

2014

Mirrored Collection, 2126 W Jefferson Blvd, Los Angeles
Summer Show: L'Art Projects, Los Angeles
Vessels: Samuel Freeman Gallery, Los Angeles
MAS ATTACK 3, Torrance Art Museum, Torrance
MFA Thesis Show #3: UCLA New Wight Gallery, Los Angeles
Inaugural Group Exhibition: Sonce Alexander Gallery, Los Angeles

2013

MFA 2014 Exhibition: UCLA New Wight Gallery, Los Angeles
GLAMFA: Cal State University Long Beach

TEMPORARY INSTALLATIONS

How Many Virgins? Los Angeles, February - March 2016
Soho House West Hollywood, January 4 - 31, 2016

HONORS

Keep In Touch, New Wight Invitational co-curator, 2013, UCLA Stewart and Lynda Resnick Scholarship, 2013, UCLA
Edward J. and Alice Mae Smith Scholarship, 2013, UCLA D'Arcy Hayman Scholarship, 2011, UCLA
OxBow Artist in Residence Centennial Grant, 2010, SAIC
New York Studio Program selection '05/06, Memphis College of Art

TEACHING

Visiting Artist Lecture Series, Claremont University Graduate MFA Program, Fall 2015
Drawing Instructor, Santa Monica College, Fall 2014
Drawing Instructor, Summer Art Institute, UCLA, 2014
Visiting Artist, UCLA, James Welling's Issues in Contemporary Art, Winter 2014
Teaching Assistant, UCLA, 2011-2014
Lecturer, SAIC OxBow Artist in Residence, Summer 2012

RESIDENCIES

OxBow, Saugatuck, MI, SAIC, 2010

PRESS

Artsy, Karen Kedmey, 4.27.16
FLAUNT Magazine no.145, Angel Fützmania, Spring 2016
Exhibition Review, LA Times, David Pagel, 09.03.15
Grounding the City of Angels, New American Paintings, Erin Langner, 07.13.15 Women at Work, KCRW Los Angeles Art Talk, Hunter Drohojowska-Philip, 03.26.15 Exhibition Review, LA Times, David Pagel, 03.20.15
Little Paper Planes Exclusive, Interview by Maggie Haas, San Francisco, 01.07.14
Graphite Interdisciplinary Journal #4, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, Spring 2013 New American Paintings, pacific coast competition #97, Open Studios Press, 12.11

CHARITIES

LA><ART Annual Benefit Auction, Paddle 8, 2015, 2014
One•N•Ten, Paddle 8 silent auction, 2015 ArtworxLA 23rd Annual Evening of Art Auction, 2015 Incognito, Santa Monica Art Museum, 2015
Get Art, Project Angel Food Auction, 2014