

Tendersweet

Paula Lawrie and Zack Rafuls

February 28 - March 28, 2020

Opening Friday, February 28, 7-9 p.m.

200 Laurier Ouest, unit 400
Montreal, Quebec



Marvin Gardens is pleased to announce the opening of *Tendersweet*, a two-person exhibition featuring the work of Paula Lawrie and Zack Rafuls, which will take place in Montreal, Quebec. We are grateful to be invited by Family Exhibitions (Montreal) and Grifter (New York) to join alongside their concurrent exhibitions. Shows by the three galleries will all take place in separate spaces housed at the same location.

Marvin Gardens will present acrylic and gauche panel works by Paula Lawrie and mixed media assemblages by Zack Rafuls. Seemingly disparate at first glance, the pairing eases into dialogue through their figurative natures and plant-like structures. But more importantly they share a path of discovery through sensitive response to the landscape and objects around them.

Lawrie's vivid paintings of trees display gesture and pose that seem human in the arch and curve of the tree trunks, and the way the top of a tree appears to be slightly cocked to the side like a head on shoulders. In another of the untitled panels the tree-trunk appears as a hand (or fork) reaching up into the leafy dome, which is draped atop. These works unabashedly come from within the language and history of landscape painting, and use the tradition as solid ground on which to explore color, texture, and line-work that together ultimately build a surreal scene.

Rafuls' assemblages also approach figuration in their stance, gesture, and proportion. Taking cues from post-minimal methods. "Decoy" stands roughly the height of a person, and is topped by a pink sunglass lens taped inside a wire frame, a familiar placement for such an object. Another work "Wisdom Totem" has an arm-like element with a bend at about elbow-length, and holds a weight as a hand might, just above floor-height. The third Sculpture references back to landscape and plant-life directly, with a home-made painted sun tacked onto a piece of branch which resembles an small arm.

The works in *Tendersweet* tell us more about themselves than they do about the world around them. They also seem to point us back to their creators rather quickly, allowing us the opportunity to see through the lens of the artists' values. This transparent lack of fuss, cultural baggage, and pretense, are a welcome experience. We are happy these two visions are able to meet and share space, here in Montreal.