

# BLEU ACIER INC.

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Neil Bender, Elisabeth Condon, Hervé DiRosa, Dominique Labauvie, Frédérique Lucien, Pierre Mabile, Philippe Richard, Peter Soriano, Michelle Weinberg, Voshardt/Humphrey

February 12 – March 27, 2010

Opening reception Thursday, February 11, 6 to 9 PM

Bleu Acier is proud to announce L'Arabesque, a group show in homage to this exceptional moment coinciding with the opening of the new Tampa Museum of Art - a landmark for culture in our city - and the museum's first major exhibition dedicated to the prints and drawings of French artist Henri Matisse, whose use of the arabesque was monumental within the history of art. Matisse was one of the last Modern artists to become a master of graphic writing, and remains so influential that contemporary artists still think of him within the context of their process.

L'Arabesque is a high expression of elegance, and cannot exist without visual grace and refinement. Elegance is transversal in its nature and in the nature of culture and can describe fashion, architecture, visual art, performance, music and movement. Commonly known as one of the most difficult positions in ballet, the term "arabesque" also refers to floral and geometric patterns found in art and architecture. For example, such highly balanced, repetitive patterns are an essential formal element of Arab mosques, since Islam prohibited the direct representation of the figure. Arabesque therefore becomes the visual replacement of the human being, instead expressed through environmental imagery.

The artists chosen for this show all share a vision of elegance,

primarily experienced through their formal work with line and color. This "linear elegance" - the propulsion of the *line* in space - can also be seen as the propulsion of an *idea* in space. The line carries the thinking and can transform it visually into form, color and narrative.

Pierre Mabile, Philippe Richard and Frédérique Lucien are mid-career French artists who work within a complex reductive abstraction of their environment heavily dependent on color. Mabile has reduced his formal world to one universal shape that he pushes to infinite possibilities reconstructing the compositions through scale and color.

Lucien abstracts organic forms working largely within the tension and balance of positive and negative space. She injects emotion with color or the absence thereof. Richard's work is based on point, line and color. The structure of his space is what informs his work, often questioning the support and its surface. Humor and narrative are what drives Hervé DiRosa's work. His spontaneous style is similar to that of tribal storytellers.

Peter Soriano is a sculptor. His conceptual work is structured on memory, time and space and how the factors of time reposition this memory and how this can be translated into image. The watercolors have this cross-reference within them; part portrait of an object or being we are sure we have seen, part fantasy of something we are not sure we have ever seen. Dominique Labauvie's sculpture is about the elegance of drawing. His sculpture, often referred to as drawing in space, carries this spatial refinement as part of its territory. This refinement is transversal in the drawings.

Elisabeth Condon's recent paintings offer us gesture as landscape and with it the mixture of Chinese multiple perspectives and Western traditions of space into a vision of a cultural wanderer. Investing her time between east and west informs her narrative rich in color and image. Michelle Weinberg's work invests a narrative space more in the here and now. Working between her urban narrative and its immediate environment, she constructs a contemporary folklore using a wealth of form and color. Neil Bender

is also a storyteller but he uses an historical approach and knowledge of process to narrate contemporary culture in the making. His vivid collages depict tales of gender and existence.

Robyn Voshardt and Sven Humphrey are collaborative artists whose recent work is within video and the photographic image. Earlier in their career they worked on marking time through image and their repetitive vocabulary and systems research in drawing is often rediscovered in their moving images.

This is the first presentation by Bleu Acier of the work of artists Michelle Weinberg of Miami and Philippe Richard of Paris, France.

BLEU ACIER INC. is an active fine art print publisher, print atelier, gallery and live-in loft that functions at the intersection of private and public space where art and the city keep company. Bleu Acier specializes in prints and works on paper by mid-career and established artists from the U.S. and Europe.

**Gallery Hours: Saturdays 1 – 5 PM and by appointment**

For further information contact Erika Schneider

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