

RECENT WORKS IN ENCAUSTIC

GERTRUD PARKER

September 16 – November 3, 2018

Parker Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of *Recent Works in Encaustic* by Gertrud Parker. The exhibition will be on view September 16th through November 3rd, 2018.

Gertrud Parker was born and raised in Vienna, Austria, where she lived until her family fled the country in the late 1930s, on the eve of German occupation. As a child, she learned sewing skills including knitting and crocheting; techniques that would become a crucial part of sculptural practice decades later. Her family settled in the San Francisco Bay Area, where her interest in textiles was rekindled by fiber artists such as Ed Rossbach, Lillian Elliot, Pat Hickman and Kay Sekimachi, introducing her to new techniques and materials. In the early 1980s, she began experimenting with gutskin: the intestinal membrane of mammals used by Inuit tribes to make parkas and line canoes. The material could be stretched, dyed, pinned and cut like fabric. Parker became locally known for her surreal sculpture composed of dyed gutskin stretched over metal armatures.

More recently, Parker has shifted her focus to the medium of encaustic. The influence of Surrealism, notably the artist Victor Brauner, led her to explore encaustic painting. Constructed with layers of melted beeswax mixed with pigments, encaustic encourages a sculptural approach to painting; the material can be scraped, dripped and carved. This new body of work introduces a turn toward self-portraiture. *Looking in the Mirror* (2017) recalls *The Last Self-Portrait* by Pierre Bonnard (1945), in which the artist candidly studies himself in the bathroom mirror. Parker can be seen clutching an iPhone to contemporize the theme. An artist's late work often provides a poignant and intimate moment of self-reflection. This exhibition includes eight works in encaustic on panel, all made within the past year.

Gertrud Parker (b. Vienna, Austria, lives and works in Marin County, CA). Select solo exhibitions include *Gertrud Parker: Watercolors and Prints*, Godwin-Turnbach Museum, Queens College, NY (2015), *Gertrud Parker, Artist and Collector*, Sonoma County Museum, Santa Rosa, CA (2011), Dominican University, San Rafael, CA (2009-10), *Gediegen*, Haaaach, Klagenfurt, Austria, *Verfremdung*, Galerie Haasner, Wiesbaden, Germany (2006), *The Visceral Sculpture of Gertrud Parker*, Richmond Art Center, Richmond, CA (2002), *Draht Object*, Galerie Haasner, Wiesbaden, Germany, *Vernissage & Kolloqium*, Bundesinstitut, St. Wolfgang, Austria, *Scheinbar Vertraut*, Haaaach, Klagenfurt, Austria (2001) and *Gertrud Parker: A Lightness in Being*, San Francisco Craft and Folk Art Museum, San Francisco, CA (1993). Her work is included in the permanent collections of the Oakland Museum and the UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive.