

Inauguration

Katharine Kuharic
Sandow Birk
Martha Wilson

October 28 – November 12, 2016



Opening Reception, 6th Floor
Friday, October 28, 6 – 8 PM
Martha Wilson Performing as Donald Trump: 7:30 PM

P·P·O·W is pleased to inaugurate our new space with a performative painting and political action by long standing gallery artist and provocateur Katharine Kuharic. In 2008, Kuharic began *What Women Lost* during Hillary Clinton's first campaign for the presidency. This large scale oil painting will be publicly completed in the 6th floor gallery on Thursday, Friday and Saturdays up to the election of our 45th President. Given the historic nature of this election, Kuharic's painting-come-performance examines gender inequity and representative democracy. In posing questions that each citizen must answer for themselves, *What Women Lost* exhibits that our democracy and our culture are inseparable, if not one and the same. Concurrently, Kuharic will be creating a series of 44 watercolors, one for each President, to benefit The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, while she occupies the gallery.

Artworks by Sandow Birk and Martha Wilson will also be presented. Like Kuharic, Birk and Wilson use humor and satire to critique American politics. Birk's recently completed *Triumph of Fear* 2016 appropriates the density and depravity of Bruegel's *Triumph of Death*. In the work Birk uses similarly proverbial imagery to indict the industrial-prison complex, corporate welfare and culture wars within a dystopian landscape implacably overseen by the Supreme Court. Following his exhaustive series *American Qur'an*, Birk's new painting characteristically captures contemporary culture and perilous social dynamics. Focusing on uniquely American racial and institutional conflicts that have plagued the final term of our first African American president, and pervade the current election, Birk's appropriation contextualizes current maladies in a deep trajectory of Western democracy.

Salesmanship and psychological manipulation are the characteristics Martha Wilson embodies in *Thump* 2016, her most recent work, which continues her decades-long body of images and performances that critique political ideologies on both sides of the aisle. Housed in a bright red frame that signals a kind of put-on-patriotism, Wilson is blonde-wigged and orange-faced. She stands with arms crossed so as to confront the viewer with the alarming extremism of Trump's political posturing, which Wilson has successfully decoded. Also on view, in a loop of video performances, Wilson dons the personas of Barbara Bush (1991, 2002, and 2008), Nancy Reagan (1985 and 1987), and Tipper Gore (1994). In these performances, Wilson discusses issues such as voting rights, mental health, civil rights, and what it means to be a woman in politics.