



Chris Hood and Viola Frey

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Chris Hood and Viola Frey. Courtesy of Et Al

Viola Frey's work is riotous, whether in the form of the moire between hand marks and colorful brush strokes on the surface or in the bricolage works between a jumble of cast forms.

Chris's paintings engage in a flattening, folding, doubling, partial erasure etc. of images onto the canvas, into the canvas, the paint reaching the surface from the back.

Viola and Chris each have their own unique style of collage. I was trying to think of how to describe a particular sensation present in the works by Chris and Viola, something tumultuous and explosive. Some anime manages to illustrate a sort of burrowing from the inside out, for instance the waters and fluids in Miyazaki (the character No Face in Spirited Away, the fish/water in Ponyo) or the flesh and toys in Akira and these works share this piling on, this stirring of foreground and background.

Their works share a democratizing of symbols, like an acrostic without a simple solution. Not quite like the way a caterpillar cocoons its multi-legged, worm-like self and therein dissolves and reforms into a butterfly. rather, the form of the parts remains legible but their logic is upended, more poetry than fiction. Chris Hood is a painter who currently lives and works in Los Angeles. He holds a BFA from Georgia State University and MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute. He has had solo exhibitions at Praz Delavallade (Los Angeles), Lyles & King (New York), MIER Gallery (Los Angeles) and Galerie Bernard Ceysson (Paris). Group exhibitions include The Zuckerman Museum of Art, Venus Over Los Angeles (Los Angeles), CANADA (New York), Saatchi Gallery (London), and Jack Hanley (New York) among others. Hood's work has been featured in Art in America, Elephant, Mousse, The Art Newspaper, Time Out New York, and New American Paintings.

Over the course of her five-decade career, Viola Frey created boldly-colored figurative sculptures, paintings and works on paper that reflect on contemporary culture, power, and gender dynamics. While most closely aligned with the Bay Area Funk movement, Frey's immense creative output delves into many aesthetic directions. She used a distinctive, personal iconography and palette to depict human figures arrayed among objects of antiquity, flea market collectibles, and interior landscapes.

Frey was born in 1933 in Lodi, California. In 1951, she moved to Oakland and attended the California College of Arts and Crafts (CCAC) and completed her BFA in 1955. She pursued an MFA in Painting at Tulane University, and studied under George Rickey, Katherine Choy, and visiting artist Mark Rothko. Frey taught at CCAC from 1964 to 1999. During her tenure, she served as the Ceramics Department chair and continuously championed the ceramic medium as an art form.

Among her many accomplishments, Frey was the recipient of two National Endowment for the Arts fellowships, a Masters of the Medium for Ceramics from the James Renwick Alliance, and an honorary Doctorate from CCAC.