

PRESS RELEASE

MATHILDE HATZENBERGER GALLERY, BRUSSELS @ SALON ZÜRCHER NYC
APRIL 30TH – MAY 6TH

WORKS FROM PAOLO BONI, ROXANNE JACKSON, ROBIN KANG AND CUCHI WHITE



OPENING RECEPTION: MONDAY, APRIL 30 : 6–8 PM

HOURS: TUESDAY, MAY 1 > SATURDAY, MAY 6 : 12–8 PM

SUNDAY, MAY 6 : 12–5 PM

CLOSING PARTY : SUNDAY, MAY 6TH: 5–7 PM

ZÜRCHER GALLERY

33 BLEECKER STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10012

About Mathilde Hatzenberger Gallery

French by birth and a former lawyer, Mathilde Hatzenberger fell in love with contemporary art by accident.

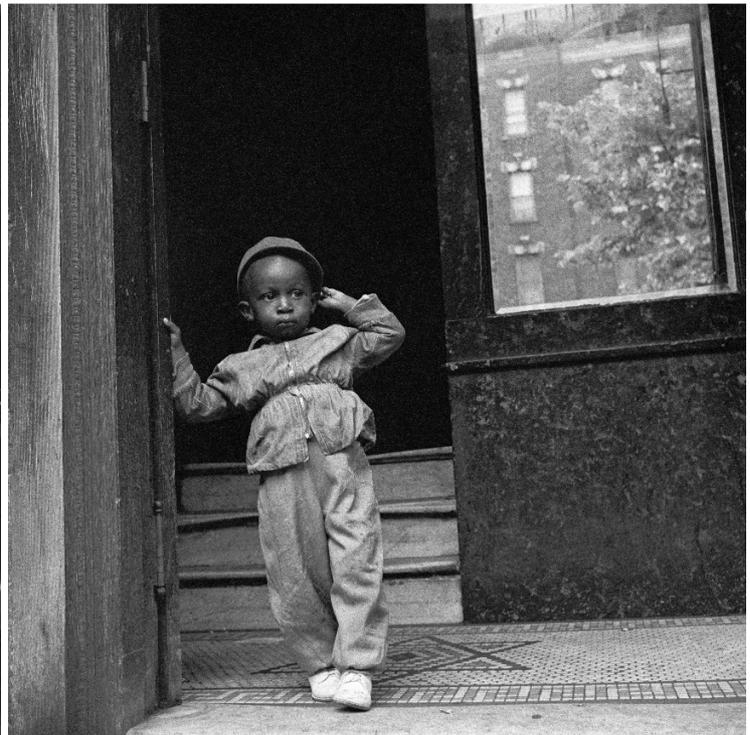
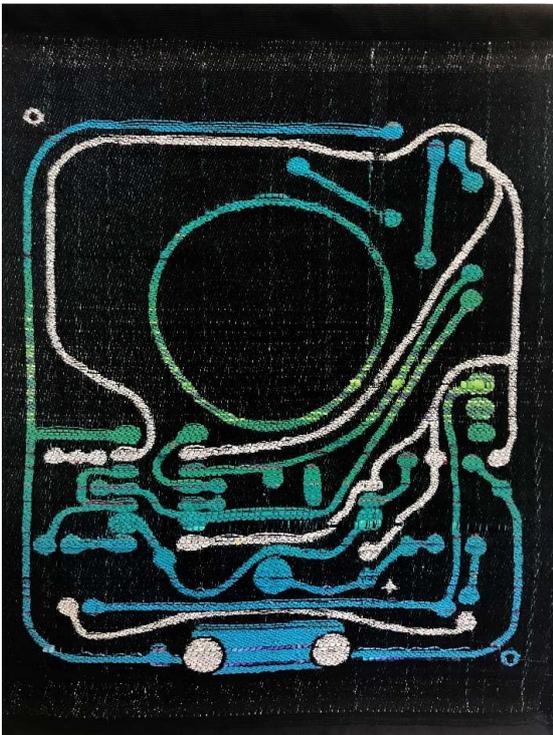
She established and launched her own gallery in Brussels, Belgium in 2011. She backed this with a strong experience of 5 years as a gallery assistant and a new cycle of studies in art history at the Sorbonne and the Ecole du Louvre in Paris, France.

Since then, the Mathilde Hatzenberger Gallery has dedicated itself to promoting living and emerging artists with ethics and passion.

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Paolo BONI, *Racines de la nuit*, 1968, 15/16, graphisculpture; Roxanne JACKSON, *Gelato*, 2018, Ceramic, faux fur, glaze, rhinestones, faux mushrooms, 9,5"x18"x7"



Robin KANG, *Arc between wires*, 2018, hand Jacquard woven cotton, hand dyed wool, metallic yarn, mohair, and plastic, 17" x 21"; Cuchi WHITE, *Boy's dreaming*, edition of 15, 25x25 cm

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Paolo BONI (1925 – 2017)

Paolo Boni was born in 1925 in Vicchio in the Mugello valley, north of Florence, a village which was also the birthplace of Giotto and Fra Angelico. Following an air raid which almost cost him his life he decided to dedicate himself entirely to painting and he became a student at the *Liceo Artistico* in Florence.

One of his teachers, the sculptor Corrado Vigni, gave part of his workshop to this talented son of a country worker so that he could paint. In 1949 he met the nineteen year old American photographer Katherine Ann White who was visiting Europe with her mother and her brother and had his first shows in Florence. Following several years of assiduous correspondence, and having completed her studies and come of age, the young woman travelled to Italy to be with him. The couple married in 1953 and decided to move to Paris in 1954. Paolo became friends with the futurist painter Gino Severini who wrote the preface to his first individual exhibition at the *Galerie Voyelle* in 1956.

In 1957, while continuing his painting and sculpting, he decided to learn engraving in Stanley Hayter's workshop. However, the traditional method using acid did not suit him so he started piercing the metal plates. He later made his first engravings in relief which he obtained by using molds composed of stratifications of different types of metal.

In 1961, following a trip to New York where the Brooklyn Museum, the New York Public Library and the Museum of Modern Art purchased his engravings, Paolo Boni began work on a series of bas reliefs with a wooden structure covered in copper, zinc and stainless steel, in addition to sculptures and bas reliefs in marble.

The couple became friends with Christine Boumeester and Henry Goetz, and later with Alberto Magnelli, painters of a previous generation who played an important bridging role in the mid-century. This friendship gave rise to this love of the south which was given concrete expression with the building of a combined home and workshop in Vallauris. On the Côte d'Azur they mixed with André Villers, Alexandre Istrati, Natalia Dimitriesco, Roger Collet, Robert Péro, Pierre Gastaud, Xavier Longobardi, Paul Revel, André Cottavoz, Pierre Theunissen and many other artists.

In 1965, a major individual exhibition of Paolo's work was held at the *Musée Picasso* in Antibes with paintings, sculptures, bas reliefs and engravings showing the diversity of his production.

Over the years, his work concentrated on two axes: *graphisculpture*, a term the Milanese gallery owner Alfonso Ciranna coined in 1970 in order to define the special nature of Paolo's engravings, and painting, the one enriching the research of the other.

In 1971, Gayzag Zakarian, the dealer and publisher, published a catalogue of all the *graphisculptures* created up to then: *Oeuvre Gravé 1957-1970* (Engraved work 1957-1970). For artists' books illustrated with his *graphisculptures* Paolo worked with contemporary writers such as Michel Butor, Maurice Roche and Georges Perec, who became his friend.

In July 1969, man walking on the moon and the space conquest made a deep impression on Paolo Boni. The opening up of these horizons new, together with the invention of acrylic paint, enabled him to completely renew his subjects, which had hitherto concentrated on human beings and landscapes, with the appearance of round targets, aircraft, arrows and later amazing flying objects incrustated in highly colored and surrealist spaces. This new style was accompanied

simultaneously by work on perspective and stripes, obviously influenced by the works of the Italian Renaissance.

Between the late 1980s and 2004 his sense of space and his ingenuity concentrated mainly on paintings made from cut wood which revisited all the classic *genres* which had appeared in his works down the years, from the oil paintings of his youth to his sculptures, *graphisculptures* and bas reliefs; these latter creations represent the result of his incessant investigation of the use of relief. Paolo Boni has left us with treasures of invention and originality. The collections of thirty-eight major museums throughout the world contain his works.

The “mechanic of the imagination”, as his friend the writer Perec called him, died on 29th March 2017 in Paris leaving a collection of about one thousand five hundred works for inventory.

He had many individual exhibitions in Europe and the United States and as and from 1978 he also participated in major international art fairs like the former *Saga* and the *FIAC*.

Roxanne JACKSON

Roxanne Jackson is a ceramic artist and mixed media sculptor living in Brooklyn, New York. Her macabre works are blackly-humored, investigating the link between human transformation, myth and kitsch.

JACKSON'S statement

In my work, I explore themes of extinction, death, and transformation. I am fascinated by the natural processes of decay and destruction. Nature is referenced not by depicting the virile stag, but by illustrating its inevitable decay. Valuing macabre sensibilities, my work is also seasoned with inspiration derived from both the banality of pop culture and the idiosyncrasies of different subcultures. The final result may seem uncanny or black-humored.

Occasionally I appropriate imagery from horror films, particularly moments of transformation—when a human becomes a beast. This transgressive imagery creates irony and tension in the work, especially when produced in the medium of clay, which has strong historical ties to comfort and beauty. Rooted in traditions of pantheism and superstition, the horror movie depicts a dark side of human nature. Mutated creatures are created in the murky depths of our collective subconscious. These images ride the boundary between animal and human, instinct and reason, the conscious and the subconscious.

The animal (or human) figure is used as a point of departure, so that I may distort, abstract, or scrutinize it. For instance, from my *Alienware* series, such as the pieces *Flawless* (2015), *Head Over Heels* (2015), and *I've Been Known To Ride on Chome* (2013), I deconstruct an image of a domestic cat and a snake to depict the internal duality of the beautiful and the beastly rooted in Jungian psychology. Domestic cats offer furry, lovable companionship and are a common subject of kitsch. Kitty-themed tchotchkes are ubiquitous, thriving in the form of figurines and cookie jars. Meanwhile, snakes are collectively misunderstood as merely venomous and loathsome—in J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, for instance, images of snakes are used effectively in the creepy tattoos that identify Lord Voldemort's allies. According to the accepted quotidian beliefs of the Western populace, the cat is cuddlesome

while the snake is inherently evil. However, when a cat becomes frightened, it transforms into a more beastly animal: fang teeth revealed, ears pulled back, *hissing*. In contrast, a coiled, sleeping snake is in a vulnerable state, and resembles a harmless lap cat. I have chosen these two animals in order to better mock the mythos of popular culture; the mash-up of these images, with an added touch of the *alien*, creates something sublime and inhuman. Other works are inspired by feminine retro-beasts, such as harpies, Sirens, and Medusa; these archaic figures are combined with imagery found in present-day subcultures. For instance, *Harpy* (2013) draws on neoshamanism and black metal, a subgenre of extreme metal music. *Gold Digger* (2015) is heavily influenced by antiquated mermaid folklore and circus sideshow culture from the mid-1800s, in which Fiji mermaids were a prominent fixture; my version of these monstrous figures appropriates this folk art tradition and re-creates this profound myth. And the monster paw in *Legends* (2015) references contemporary manicure culture, a postmodern gesture that echoes what T. S. Eliot called the manipulation of a “continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity.” This provocative work juxtaposes the old and the new, the real and the fabled, the kitschy and the grotesque.

Robin KANG

Drawing inspiration as much from her Southwestern upbringing as the increasingly networked world around her, the artist Robin Kang is reinterpreting the age-old tradition of weaving with the added leverage of digital software. Kang—with the help of a very rare type of loom that combines hand weaving with computerized processing—makes woven tapestries depicting microchips, motherboards, and other elements of modern technology that remain quasi-mystical to the average Macbook user.

Extract from Jan Han, “When the Web Is Made of Thread: Artist Robin Kang on Weaving High-Tech Tapestries for the Internet Era”, Artspace, sept 2016)

The historical connections between the textile industry and the development of technology provide inspiration for my recent work. The Jacquard loom is argued by some to be an ancestor to the invention of the computer, as it was the first machine to use a punch card system. While researching early computer hardware I learned that the earliest instruments for memory storage included both handwoven copper wires and hand-drawn solder lines. These objects embodied concepts of woven information and a kind of technological drawing, which becomes inspiration for the digital sketches that I then weave by hand on the Jacquard loom. Ferrite Memory Cores were the predominant form of computer memory during 1955-1975. These early computer parts were hand woven out of copper wires with tiny bead-like toroids that were magnetized, positive or negative, to hold binary data. Though no longer hand woven, computer memory is still somewhat based on this construction format.

Concepts of memory and symbolism that refer to cultural identity are depicted in textiles throughout history. This makes for fertile ground for the mixing of references from the ancient and the contemporary together, producing a kind of blending of space and time. Photoshop pen tool gestures layered with symbols from ancient weaving traditions and motherboard hardware blend

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together amid interlocking threads. The juxtaposition of textiles with electronics opens an interesting conversation of reconciling the old with the new, traditions with new possibilities, as well as the relationship between textiles, symbols, language, and memory.

In *Aesthetica Magazine*, 1 March 2016

Cuchi WHITE

Cuchi White, born Katherine Ann White, was an American photographer known internationally for her work in color produced as and from the 1970s. When, after a break between 1958 and 1974, she returned to photography she was very attracted by what was known as *trompe-l'œil* but not yet known as "Street Art", with which she loved mixing their close precursors in the churches and palaces. In 1949, she met her future husband, Paolo Boni, a young Italian painter, in a sculptor's studio in Florence, they moved to Paris in 1954, where they lived together for the rest of their lives, in go between with their house and artist's studio in Vallauris south of France.

Cuchi White photographic interests always swung between these two worlds, the old and contemporary, which she brought together at times, and she was always fascinated by the magic of old art which had drawn her like a magnet as soon as she arrived in Europe. The incongruous aspect of reality, the tricks vision plays became her favorite subjects. She gives us access to this world, which exists alongside visible reality, by telling more stories enriched by classic cultural references or simply by highlighting the upheavals which occur when one era intrudes upon another: false windows, sculptures, interiors of museums, castles and churches, doll collections, accumulations of objects but also industrial sites, items which are incongruous or unexpected, the play on light and shade which transforms places and streets.

She produced a book on the *trompe l'œil*, another on the sublime villas on the Côte d'Azur and a third on the perched villages on the Franco-Italian Riviera. Beginning in the Nineties, she completed a striking series on houses built to resemble ships, no doubt inspired by the transatlantic liners on which she travelled between United States and Europe. Several exhibitions were devoted to this work, *Navirland* (The land of ships) and *Demeures en Partance* (Homes ready to sail). For the national heritage in France she worked with a number of museums and took photographs of the Durance river and, in Brittany, of the *sentiers des douaniers* (the paths used by the customs officers).

Since her first exhibition at the Galerie Arena in 1980 at the *Rencontres internationales de la photographie* in Arles, France, (since renamed *Rencontres de la photographie*), and her work with the Réattu museum in the same town, she regularly attended this event. She was often with her Italian friends and photographers such as Giovanna Calvenzi, Gabriele Basilico, Luigi Ghirri, Mimmo Jodice and so many others. She shared those friendships all the more easily given that her husband, the artist Paolo Boni, was Italian and a large portion of their work, and many of the exhibitions of one or the other, took place in Italy. In 1984, Cuchi took part of an innovative and significant milestone in

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contemporary photography, the *Viaggio in Italia* (Travelling in Italy) with nineteen other photographers¹, project initiated by the photographer Luigi Ghirri. In 2012 was her last exhibition in Paris at the gallery In situ, where Fabienne Leclerc chose to show photographs of trompe l'oeil from the book *L'Œil ébloui* which preface was written by her friend the French writer Georges Perec.

Her first black-and-white photographs show that Cuchi White already had an excellent sense of framing and composition. As a teenager, she was an intern with the photographer of the Cleveland Museum of Arts. When she was fourteen, on her trips to New York, she soaked up the liberating atmosphere of the city with its exhibitions and museums which nurtured her abiding passion for art. In 1947 the Edward Weston exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York made such a strong impression on her that she travelled to Point Lobos to meet the photographer himself. At Weyhe's art bookstore on Lexington Avenue she bought copies of *Camera Work*, Dorothy Norman's *Stieglitz Memorial Portfolio* and Paul Strand's *Time in New England*. Cuchi was a student at the very progressive Bennington University in Vermont where, amongst others, Max Salvadori, Erich Fromm and Martha Graham taught and in 1951 the university awarded her a degree of Bachelor of Arts. When she arrived in Italy in 1952, the roman newspaper *Il Mondo di Pannuzio* bought fifty of her photographs for publishing.

As a great admirer of André Kertész, Edward Weston and Paul Strand, in 1948 she took part in one of the last exhibitions of the *Photo League* called *This is the Photo League* with photographs of broken statues taken around the sculpture workshop at her university.

New York was the American city closest to the heart of the young photographer Katherine Ann White who was born in Cleveland in 1930 and who later became known as Cuchi White. She availed of every opportunity to wander about the city armed with her 13 x 18 large-format view and Rolleiflex 6 x 6 cameras. Her favorite subjects were street life and its very special atmosphere. These pictures are stamped with the pursuit of humanist and social aspects, a pursuit which aims to show the multiracial reality of the city. A deep poetic fascination for urban places and architecture emerged at this time and continued, from the 1970s onwards, to infuse her work in color with a lively imaginative element.

Following a life-threatening accident in June 1997, Cuchi stopped taking photographs, just before she had begun working on superimposition of double images and on a series on accumulation in baroque interiors. "La Cuchi" as her friends used to call her with her amazing laugh which was so communicative and her outspokenness who blithely mixed French, Italian and English, left us at the autumn of 2013.

¹ *Viaggio in Italia*, Publisher: Il Quadrante 1984, with the photographs of Olivo Barbieri, Gabriele Basilico, Giannantonio Battistella, Vincenzo Castella, Andrea Cavazzutti, Giovanni Chiaramonte, Mario Cresci, Vittore Fossati, Carlo Garzia, Guido Guidi, Luigi Ghirri, Shelley Hill, Mimmo Jodice, Gianni Leone, Claude Nori, Umberto Sartorello, Mario Tinelli, Ernesto Tulliozi, Fulvio Ventura, Cuchi White.