

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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Charlie James Gallery presents the following exhibition:

### **JENNIFER DALTON – *PARTICIPATION TROPHY***

**FEBRUARY 25 – APRIL 1, 2017**

**ARTIST'S RECEPTION SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2016 FROM 6-9 PM**

**Charlie James Gallery** is delighted to present a solo exhibition by gallery artist **Jennifer Dalton** titled *Participation Trophy*, opening February 25th from 6-9pm at the gallery in Chinatown.

In *Participation Trophy*, Dalton presents video, sculpture, and interactive works as exercises in confronting and overcoming the fears that stand in the way of succeeding in or even pursuing our goals. The humble participation trophy was a convenient shorthand for unearned entitlement long before “participation trophy generation” became a weaponized insult in our current culture wars. But is full, active participation in all areas of our lives really that easy? And why should anyone roll their eyes at earnest participation in any worthwhile endeavor, whether in the end there is success or failure? The importance of participation is especially obvious in our contemporary political moment, when we are recognizing the urgency of consistent, active civic engagement.

Using her own lifelong phobia of public speaking as an inspiration, Dalton enrolled in a public speaking course in an effort to confront and overcome this fear and chronicled her emotions as she progressed. “Glossophobia,” the resulting video installation, consists of a small circle of chairs, one of which is replaced by a video showing the artist’s hands fidgeting in her lap as she takes part in a conversation with a fellow-sufferer about their fear. In “New Trick,” Dalton chronicles a less momentous but no less earnest exploration. The two-channel video installation recounts her year spent training to execute a standing backflip. The details of this endeavor are presented in information-overload style, with grids of simultaneous training videos, financial and physical data, and a narrative text crawl. This quixotic quest, spurred by a casual conversation with a personal trainer, incorporates themes of aging, risk, ambition and self-esteem. The sideways ending of this story underscores that in real life, success can be difficult to assess. Dalton also presents “Successories,” a series of wall-based sculptures combining award plaques and inspirational slogans into a more personal, unbalanced form. Mimicking engravings, they are hand-drawn in pencil on zinc and copper, and mounted irregularly on marble. “Hopes and Fears” consists of two plexiglass vitrines on a steel table. Viewers are invited to respond to the questions etched into the vitrines, “What are you afraid of?” and “What do you want?” by writing their answers on notepads color coded by categories of hopes or fears and placing them in the vitrines, which begin the exhibition empty.

In **Jennifer Dalton's** (b. 1967, Los Angeles, CA) drawings, sculptures and installations she collects, organizes and evaluates cultural information according to her own personal criteria. Her subjects are often chosen in an attempt to test a hypothesis or to dissect a chip on her shoulder. Her work has recently been exhibited at the Flag Art Foundation, New York, NY; Gagosian Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; The Nathan Cummings Foundation, New York, NY; Center Galleries, Detroit, MI; Isolyatsia Foundation, Donetsk, Ukraine; Elmhurst Art Museum, Elmhurst, IL; and Ballroom Marfa, Marfa, TX. Her artwork has been featured in *33 Artists in 3 Acts*, by Sarah Thornton; *Various Small Books*, edited by Jeff Brouws, Wendy Burton-Brouws, and Hermann Zscheigner; and *Art on the Block: Tracking the New York Art World from Soho to the Bowery, Bushwick and Beyond* by Anne Fensterstock. She contributed an essay to the recent collection *Living and Sustaining a Creative Life: Essays by 40 Working Artists*, edited by Sharon Loudon. She earned a B.A. in Fine Art from UCLA in 1990 and an MFA in Painting and Sculpture from Pratt Institute in 1997.