

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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Charlie James Gallery is delighted to present the exhibition:

### **ON GOING HOME – CURATED BY DEBRA SCACCO**

**SEPTEMBER 2 – OCTOBER 14, 2017**

**ARTISTS' RECEPTION SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2nd 2017 FROM 6-9PM**

Charlie James Gallery is delighted to present *On Going Home*, a group exhibition curated by **Debra Scacco**, featuring works by **Tanya Aguiñiga, Carmen Argote, Shagha Ariannia, Regina Mamou, and Alexis Zoto**.

*On Going Home* is a study of the intertwined relationship of origin, memory and place. In the essay by the same name, Joan Didion reflects on “the emotional charges between me and the place that I came from”. These places are imbedded in our psyche, memory, and identity. These places shape our ideals and perceptions; they form the eyes that see the world around us. Our relationship with the very concept of this place is multi-layered: constructed over time through the lens of experience and circumstance. *On Going Home* explores our relationship with the truths of our past, and the ways we process, interpret and present these truths in the context of our current day self.

Bringing together a group of multi-cultural artists now resident in Los Angeles, works in *On Going Home* examine personal and cultural heritage; and the unique, tertiary culture born from experience in these multiple worlds.

Carmen Argote's work discusses the nuance of class structure through architecture and inhabited space. Her work in *On Going Home* examines architecture, ritual and the embodied space; raising questions of cultural statements conveyed through domestic systems of display. In the work, coffee makers are carefully placed on a dressed one-way staircase, inviting the viewer to become a ritual participant. A self-portrait of sorts, the scale of the staircase mirrors the scale of the artist's body. Exquisitely crafted garments are tailored specifically for this displaced architecture. As one might dress a wedding chair, Argote cloaks the architectural form: a means to imprint cultural heritage and immigrant identity on the fabric of the spaces in which we live.

Having spent her childhood traversing the Mexican / American border, works by Tanya Aguiñiga are rooted in conversations of heritage and tradition in relation to our contemporary experience of place. Aguiñiga's *Cradle* works are exquisitely crafted open work baskets: a traditional medium with a perceived relation to the feminine. Countering this is Aguiñiga's *Structures of Oppression*. Simultaneously weighted and weightless, the work calls to question perceptions of masculinity. The works in conversation interrogate societal gender perceptions; and how these may imprint our personal experience of place.

In *Two Americas Away*, Shagha Ariannia raises questions of time and distance. The video is taken from a security system installed in the home of the artist's grandparents in Shahrood, Iran. The cameras, installed by her Los-Angeles-based parents to look after aging loved ones from afar, enable Ariannia's family to be present while absent. Yet the nature of surveillance footage and location in war-time Iran leads us to a sense of anticipation, and the ultimate question: how, from the distance of another country, can we protect those we love? In Ariannia's audio work *Our Future is The Approaching Past*, we hear the artist learning to speak English as a young child, interspersed with Iranian revolutionary songs. The family cassette tape was recorded and re-recorded from 1978 to 1993: conveying revolution one moment, a mother's love the next.

Regina Mamou's interest in political ideology is rooted in her Iraqi father's history. As a former priest, the artist's father left the clergy, and Iraq, for fear of persecution. In *An Island Is Just An Island*, Mamou explores the construct of physical boundaries and the physicality of space. With ideological utopias often referred to as islands of idealism, Mamou is creating forced utopias through material explorations; thereby highlighting the arbitrary nature of boundaries, and social constructs that exist within them.

Works on paper by Alexis Zoto are inspired by her Albanian Orthodox heritage and her experiences as a woman, artist, educator, wife and mother. Drawing from research on motifs from traditional Albanian kilims (flat woven rugs), her work discusses acculturation and feminism, often pairing stories from antiquity with family lore.

#### **About the curator**

Debra Scacco (b. 1976, New York) is an interdisciplinary artist creating work about the relationship between time, memory and place. She has exhibited extensively, including solo exhibitions at Klowden Mann (Los Angeles) and Marine Contemporary (Los Angeles), and group exhibitions at Royal Academy of Arts (London), Charlie James Gallery (Los Angeles), Patrick Heide Contemporary (London), and Royale Projects (Palm Desert). Scacco's work has been written about and featured in the Los Angeles Times, Huffington Post, and Art in America. Public collections and commissions include Los Angeles Country Museum of Art, Hammer Museum, and Los Angeles State Historic Park. In 2012, Scacco was the first Artist-in-Residence at the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island Museum. Scacco lives and works in Los Angeles.