

# LAUREL GITLEN

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ALLYSON VIEIRA  
CORTÈGE

February 22-March 24, 2013  
Opening reception Friday, February 22, 6-8pm

Laurel Gitlen is proud to present *Cortège*, an exhibition of new work by Allyson Vieira. Using contemporary building materials, standards, and tools, Vieira's work interrogates the relationship between form and material across eras. As history itself is recycled, relocated, and rebuilt through the succession of societies and the passage of time, forms and motifs are repurposed, creating new pedigrees and lineages that reverberate the signs of the past. At the same time, the structures we inhabit, quotidian trash, and raw materials coningle and compress into the literal bedrock of successive generations.

In his poem, "Cortège," Apollinaire beckons to himself, "Guillaume, it's time that you came." From blocks of stacked drywall, pairs of nascent figures emerge in a burdened contraposto, as if answering an echo of his call. Carved with a Sawzall from solid, rectangular columns – the dimensions of which are a tense negotiation between standard construction dimensions and those of the artist's body – they fuse female form and workaday architecture. Neither solid block nor figure, existing between material-as-form and form-qua-form, these faceted caryatids support steel I-beams above their heads, creating post-and-lintel structures. In this fundamental object type, both modern and ancient, two upright posts support the weight of a perpendicular lintel, distributing it to the ground. Creating doors, windows, warehouses, temples, and tenements, these structures are the unit-forms of basic architecture.

Two towers of cast drywall studs, formed from successively smaller post-and-lintel units, bracket the gallery. Wavering rolls of mirrored Mylar push the towers' reflections beneath the floor, extending them from our materially positive present through the membrane of zero, underground into the imaginary past, counting backward through negative numbers we cannot actually reckon. The units of Vieira's constructions are themselves copies. Studs made of laminated drywall are simultaneously a waste-product of inexpensive construction and an essential tool in storing and delivering large stacks of the material from which they are made. They are what's left over when the job is done. Here, drywall stud remnants from the construction of the artist's studio are cast in plaster (the historical material of three-dimensional duplication) and mixed with concrete to make a new, original building material that masquerades as marble. Along one long wall lies a pile of more drywall stud casts: a schematic big-box store in hypothetical collapse.

In the side gallery, a rudimentary apsidal structure of balanced drywall sheets ensconces a bronze, cult-like, figural pair, *Hygra Physis*, in arrested action. The winged phallus and the octopus invite a new mythology: an animated portrait of the generative conflict between optical, search-and-destroy power and an encompassing, chthonian threat from the deep, acted out in perpetuity.

Allyson Vieira (b. 1979) lives and works in New York. She currently has two public commissions on view in New York: in the Highline exhibition *Lilliput* and in Public Art Fund's *Configurations* at MetroTech Center Commons. Her work is currently included in *A Handful of Dust* at Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, and will be included

in *Remainder*, a forthcoming exhibition at the Philbrook Museum of Art, and in a two-person exhibition at Non Objectif Sud, Tulette, France. Vieira will also be the subject of a forthcoming solo exhibition at the Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland in September 2013.

Please note the gallery's new location at 122 Norfolk Street, one block east of Essex Street between Rivington and Delancey. The gallery is open Wednesday-Sunday, 11am-6pm. For more information or images, please contact [galler@laurelgitlen.com](mailto:galler@laurelgitlen.com) or 212.274.0761.