



Susan Inglett Gallery is pleased to present BEVERLY SEMMES: *POT PEEK*, on view from 3 February 2022 through 12 March 2022.

*POT PEEK* introduces the latest manifestations of Beverly Semmes's ongoing Feminist Responsibility Project (FRP), a series of absurd, sexy, enigmatic canvases that conceal and complicate images originally gleaned from vintage gentlemen's magazines. In 2003, Semmes was given a collection of *Hustler* and *Penthouse* back-issues. Spending time with the images and the women contained therein, the artist experienced a conflicting combination of desires — a motherly urge to protect these subjects from the sexualized gaze, and the impulse to spend a potentially unhealthy amount of time engaging the material.

The artist's response is a cornucopia of mixed-media interventions that submerge the exposed protagonists in translucent layers of strategically applied, gestural color. According to curator Ingrid Schaffner, who foregrounded earlier FRP's in the 57th Carnegie International, "Taken as a whole, Beverly Semmes's FRP is a kind of camp. It disrupts the normal flow of pornography by strategically amplifying the awkward and obvious construction of the pose, the gaze, the exploitation, and the bodies that make it work." This is especially true of the work in *POT PEEK*, in which uncovered ankles and elbows allow us a glimpse of exposed flesh while piquing our interest in the hidden parts of the composition.

The title *POT PEEK* references the vessels that appear across Semmes's interdisciplinary practice, serving as a metaphor for the female body and the source of its perceived value: its potential to bear children, and its role as a receptacle for male desire. Further, the title speaks to the experience of looking at this new body of work — the voyeuristic urge to peer through and penetrate Semmes's curtains of color — and the experience of meeting her subjects' gazes directly, as occurs in artworks *See Through* and *Eye Tooth*. Once executed on the intimate scale of magazine pages, the FRP's in *POT PEEK* render their subjects larger than life, further complicating the balance of power between subject, object, and viewer.

BEVERLY SEMMES (b. 1958) shines a light on the paradoxes surrounding the representation of the female body in media and culture. Semmes gained early recognition for her fabric installations of large-scale feminine garments, and her ongoing Feminist Responsibility Project (FRP) creates an intermediary space in which queries involving female sexuality can take form. Semmes has been honored with many solo exhibitions, including the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; the ICA Philadelphia; the MCA Chicago; and The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College. Her work was most recently included in *Witch Hunt* at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, and the 57th Carnegie International, Pittsburgh. In the spring of 2022 JOAN, Los Angeles will co-present an installation of Carwash Collective (Beverly Semmes and Jennifer Minniti) and Emily Mast with the Hammer Museum and ICA Los Angeles. Semmes's work can be found in the permanent collections of the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden; Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC, among others.

BEVERLY SEMMES: *POT PEEK* will be on view at the gallery located at 522 West 24 Street Tuesday to Saturday 10 AM to 6 PM. For additional information, please contact Susan Inglett Gallery at 212 647 9111 or [info@inglettgallery.com](mailto:info@inglettgallery.com).

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