

Benjamin Cabral*Well, Maybe Next Year*

Curated by Lauren Powell

April 9 – May 15, 2021

Shelter Gallery and Lauren Powell are pleased to present *Well, Maybe Next Year*, a solo exhibition by Benjamin Cabral exploring nostalgia, memory, and trauma. This is Cabral's third solo show with independent curator Powell.

In *Well, Maybe Next Year* Cabral examines the romanticization of the past and the unreliable nature of memory by transforming the gallery into an ice rink, an imagined space such as the ones in which his mother, a former competitive figure skater, would perform. The floor is strewn with the flowers and stuffed animals that are tossed into the rink following a routine and are often kept by the skater as good luck tokens, and the show's title is borrowed from the final line of Sondheim's "Send in the Clowns" which scored one of her skating routines. The artist never actually witnessed his mother's performance on the ice, yet describes the influence of her skating career as very impactful on his own life, drawing a connection between her performances on the ice and his own past performing in theatre. In this imagined ice rink the beauty and sparkle is presented without any of the trauma, injuries, and sacrifice that accompany a lifetime of performance. After a year marked by separation from our loved ones whose presence in our lives may, for the moment at least, only be in memory, the show leaves us at a point of cautious hope following the completion of a routine and the offering of good luck charms. Maybe next year.

Benjamin Cabral (born 1993, San Diego) is a multidisciplinary artist whose bead and rhinestone encrusted paintings and sculptures straddle the line between craft and fine art. His work is largely autobiographical and performative in nature, creating an honest, yet inherently unreliable, portrait of the artist examining the intersections between trauma and nostalgia, joy and sorrow, and the digital and the analog. Cabral's paintings are conceived digitally, and the pixels are then transferred to the panel through the meditative application of beads. Cabral earned a BA at Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego (2016) and an MFA at the Art Institute of Chicago (2019). He has had solo exhibitions with Lauren Powell at SPRING/BREAK, Los Angeles and SPRING/BREAK, New York (2020), and Steve Turner, Los Angeles(2021). This is his first solo exhibition with Shelter Gallery.



Shelter

Lauren Powell (Detroit, MI, b. 1984) is a curator, art advisor, and contemporary art enthusiast who is deeply involved in both NYC and LA art communities. In an effort to make art more accessible to all humans Powell started the art blog www.artofthis.world in 2018, transitioning into weekly sales of emerging artists on laurenpowellart.com in 2020 during the pandemic. She has curated 6 IRL shows and 28 digital shows over the last two years. Lauren also empowers artists with disabilities through art experiences with Exceptional Artist Foundation - producing and executing 4 virtual art experiences over zoom to the DD community over the last 6 months, and is coordinating a private collection of works by contemporary queer artists with hopes of opening it to the public in the future. Lauren has curated shows at Shelter Gallery, Postmasters Gallery, Spring/Break Art Shows, and Chelsea Market and her work has been covered in Artnet, Artsy, Hyperallergic, The Art Newspaper, & W Magazine. Powell lives and works in Brooklyn.