

# Anton Kern Gallery

## Lara Schnitger

### *Too Nice Too Long*

November 16 – December 23, 2017

Opening reception: Thursday, November 16 from 6–8pm

For her solo exhibition *Too Nice Too Long*, Los Angeles-based artist Lara Schnitger (Dutch, b. 1969) transforms Anton Kern Gallery into the headquarters of “Suffragette City,” her traveling hybrid procession-protest piece that draws inspiration from occult rituals and uses unabashed graphic design and boundary-pushing sculpture to champion women’s rights. With elements from the procession presented as static works of art, the exhibition offers an opportunity to examine Schnitger’s brilliant sense of material, architecture, and space.

Schnitger’s sculptural practice is rooted in the contrast and union of ‘soft’ and ‘hard’. She uses rigid materials such as wood and resin in combination with soft materials like leather, fur, silk, cotton, and lycra to create sculptures that reference the female body. Pieces of lumber are fastened together to provide an underlying skeleton, while opaque and translucent materials stretch over it to form a permeable skin. The inner and outer are interdependent and require balanced tension in order to exist, suspended in time and space. The artist’s paintings and quilts are created by piecing together different patterned fabrics and incorporating text, thus doubling their functionality as art and protest sign. By pairing techniques like dying, quilting, weaving, and sewing with tough and rebellious postures and messaging, the artist pushes the expressive power of traditional crafts.

Schnitger marks the clubhouse at 16 E 55th St with a flag waving from the exterior of the building that declares “A Dress Is Not A Yes”. Within the main gallery are new quilts and ‘girl gang’ fabric paintings emblazoned with protest slogans culled from t-shirts, bumper stickers and buttons, paired with towering sculptures that boldly assert feminine power. Lined up along a wall are seven ‘slut-sticks’, wooden armatures bound with stretched fabric and leather, becoming abstract figures in stages between dress and undress. On the second floor you will find intricately-constructed oversized ‘burden’ backpacks (which will be activated throughout the run of the exhibition) and sequin paintings that capture the irreverence and spontaneity of bathroom graffiti. An ad hoc newspaper will be available at the gallery with press clippings about stagings of “Suffragette City” around the world.

Schnitger uses female sexuality and depictions of the body as a tool to challenge what is deemed acceptably feminine versus obscene. The work is playfully over-the-top and exuberant yet serious; pointedly addressing the continued struggle for women’s equality and safety in a culture of patriarchy.

*Too Nice Too Long* blurs the line between art and protest, sculpture and body, gallery and street. Works in the exhibition are crafted with the practical intention of being activated in a public protest. Inspired by demonstrations throughout history, from the Suffragettes to SlutWalk, FEMEN, and Pussy Riot, this evolving body of work provides a forum to discuss contemporary political and social issues, and tools to inspire and embolden a new generation of feminists.

Lara Schnitger (b.1969 in Haarlem, Netherlands) is a Dutch-American artist. Schnitger has exhibited internationally since 1996 and her work is featured in the permanent collections of Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; the DZ Bank Kunstsammlung, Frankfurt, Germany; FRAC Champagne-Ardenne, Reims, France; KW, Berlin, Germany; Rubell Family Collection, Miami, FL; Perez Art Museum, Miami, FL; The Saatchi Gallery, London, UK; Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Netherlands, among others.

Her traveling exhibition, *Suffragette City*, debuted at Art Basel Parours in Basel, Switzerland (2015) and traveled to FRAC Champagne-Ardenne in Reims, France (2016); the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2016); Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Kunsthaus Dresden, Germany, and with the Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin, Germany (all 2017). Recent solo exhibitions include Galerie Gebr. Lehmann, Dresden, Germany; and Lundgren Gallery, Mallorca, Spain (2017). Recent groups exhibitions include *Brightsidars*, Verge Center for the Arts, Sacramento, CA (2017); *Hope and Hazard: A Comedy of Eros*, curated by Eric Fischl, Hall Art Collection, Reading, VT (2017); and the inaugural exhibition *Revolution in the Making: Abstract Sculpture by Women, 1947 – 2016*, at Hauser, Wirth & Schimmel in Los Angeles (2016).

For Immediate Release



Lara Schnitger, *Too Nice Too Long*, 2017, fabric on canvas, 85 x 92 inches

#### General Inquiries

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#### Press Inquiries

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#### Gallery Hours

Tuesday through Saturday

10am – 6pm