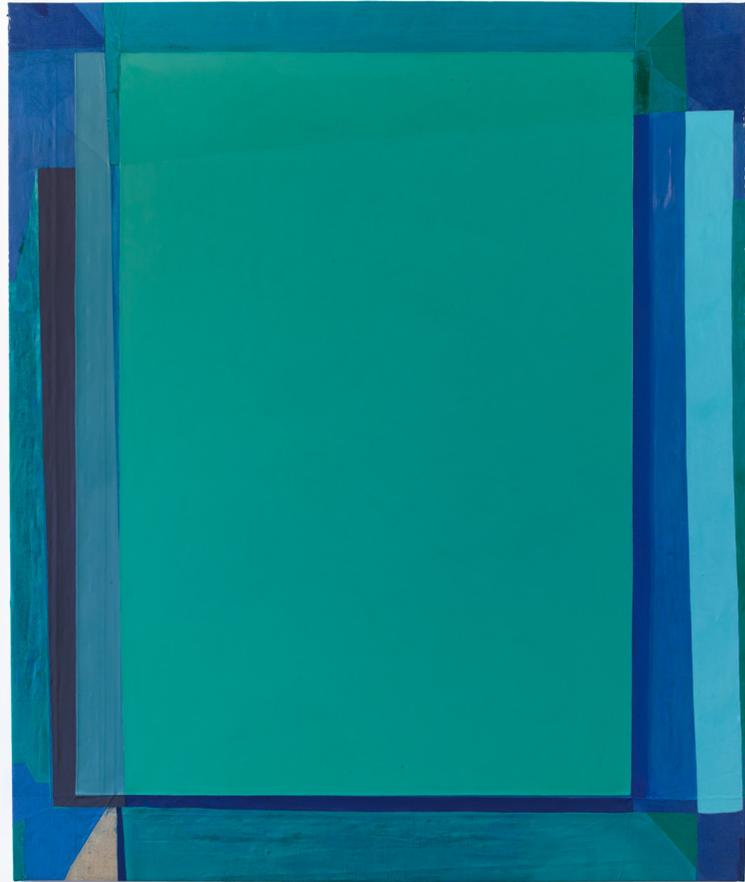


**The Aldrich
Contemporary
Art Museum**

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Julia Rommel, *Moroccan Boyfriend*, 2015
Courtesy of the artist and Bureau, New York

For Immediate Release:

***Julia Rommel: Two Italians, Six Lifeguards*
November 15, 2015, through April 3, 2016
Opening Reception: Sunday, November 15, 2-5pm**

Ridgefield, CT (October, 2015): The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum will present Julia Rommel's first solo museum exhibition, *Two Italians, Six Lifeguards*, as part of the *Painting in Four Takes* exhibition series from November 15, 2015, through April 3, 2016.

Rommel will debut a series of new paintings presented alongside small works from 2010 to 2012. The oil paintings range from head to body size, and oscillate between cool and warm palettes, color fields of denim blues, moody greys, creamy whites, salmon pinks, and citrus hues. All are intimately connected to their edges, as they are stretched and re-stretched numerous times over the course of their making in a physical wrangle of layering and effacing. As with haiku poetry, Rommel's seemingly



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accessible surfaces belie their mysterious complexity, involving a laborious choreography of cutting, sanding, wiping, expunging, and overlaying, as the build-up and break down of the composition both reveals and disguises a history of choices and decisions, giving the paintings a rhythm and expression not unlike a life cycle. Taken in concert, Rommel's stressed surfaces, with their bends, folds, cracks, frayed edges and staple holes, have a vitality that connects them to the viewer—and the viewer to the works—in various stages of being and becoming.

Julia Rommel: Two Italians, Six Lifeguards, organized by Aldrich curator Amy Smith-Stewart, is generously supported by Jennifer and Claude Amadeo and Patrons Circle contributors Sascha Bauer; Bureau, New York; Liz Goldman; and Serge and Ian Krawiecki Gazes.

Painting in Four Takes

Julia Rommel: Two Italians, Six Lifeguards is part of *Painting in Four Takes*, a series of solo exhibitions that will provide a window into the practices of four engaging painters who imbue the medium with relevance and character. In addition to Rommel, Steve DiBenedetto, Hayal Pozanti, and Ruth Root will be featured. On view from November 15, 2015, through April 3, 2016, the exhibitions will mark the first time in over twenty years that The Aldrich has dedicated all of its galleries to painting.

The last one hundred years have witnessed the explosion of virtually every available means and medium in the service of art making, yet painting has not only maintained a central position in visual art, but has also adapted creatively to rapid changes in our culture as a whole. Today, painting is embedded in the broad debate of actual vs. virtual, and its ability to balance what is illusive and what is real, what is tactile and what is optical, and what is emotive and what is formal, providing fertile ground for a diverse range of artists.

“While some point to marketability as the basis for the unwavering position of painting as a leading visual arts medium, for many artists, painting provides the most relevant platform for expression, allowing for both the potential of innovation and deep historical continuity,” says Richard Klein, The Aldrich’s exhibitions director.

Aldrich curator Amy Smith-Stewart explains, “The four artists selected span generations, methods, and intentions, but all are deeply entrenched in what painting is and can be in the image-dominated atmosphere of our twenty-first century.”

The public are invited to a free reception celebrating the four exhibitions from 2 to 5 pm on Sunday, November 15.

The Artist

Julia Rommel was born in 1980 in Salisbury, Maryland, and lives and works in New York. She received her MFA from American University in Washington, DC. She has mounted solo exhibitions, *Delaware* (2012) and *The Little Matchstick* (2014), at Bureau, New York; *Girl with Silver Rings*, at Sorry We're Closed, Brussels (2104); and



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Mother Superior (2013) at Gaudel de Stampa, Paris. She has been included in group exhibitions at the Flag Foundation, New York; White Flag Projects, St Louis; T293, Naples; and Greene Naftali, New York; among others. Her work was presented by Bureau at Art Basel Statements in June 2015 and at Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin, in a three-person exhibition.

The Museum

Founded by Larry Aldrich in 1964, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum is dedicated to fostering the work of innovative artists whose ideas and interpretations of the world around us serve as a platform to encourage creative thinking. It is the only museum in Connecticut devoted to contemporary art, and throughout its fifty-year history has engaged its community with thought-provoking exhibitions and education programs.

The Museum's education and public programs are designed to connect visitors of all ages to contemporary art through innovative learning approaches in hands-on workshops, tours, and presentations led by artists, curators, Museum educators, and experts in related fields. Area schools are served by curriculum-aligned on-site and in-school programs, as well as teachers' professional development training.

Supporters

The Aldrich, in addition to significant support from its Board of Trustees, receives contributions from many dedicated friends and patrons. Major funding for Museum programs and operations has been provided by the Department of Economic and Community Development, Connecticut Office of the Arts; the National Endowment for the Arts; the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation; the Leir Charitable Foundations; The Goldstone Family Foundation; the Anne S. Richardson Fund; and Fairfield Fine Art.

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HamletHub; TownVibe, publishers of *Ridgefield Magazine*; and WSHU Public Radio are the official media sponsors of The Aldrich in 2015.

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