

BORTOLAMI

Brook Hsu

pond-love

11 January - 16 February 2019

Opening Friday, January 11 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm

*i wear a pond, a jacket, moss jacket
wrap me in those places between
the buildings
i'm fingering the crack in the
pavement*

- Brook Hsu, 2019

Bortolami is pleased to present *pond-love*, a solo presentation of new works by Brook Hsu in the gallery viewing room.

Two of Hsu's carpet paintings, *pond-love* and *grasshopper* hang on adjacent walls in the viewing room. These works depict green-hued forms that exist somewhere between the material and ethereal realms. *pond-love* began as an image of a spiral, which then transformed into the ripples of a pond surface disturbed by a hand dipping into the water. A figure appears, looking not only at its own reflection in the murky pond, but also past it. The composition is derived from Pierre Klossowski's work, *Roberte face au miroir*, however in Hsu's horizontally-oriented take, Klossowski's mirror is replaced by the pond. In *grasshopper*, two frog-like forms crouch, one leaping over the other's back. Working with carpet for the past three years, Hsu is drawn to the way it absorbs ink, dye, and thick acrylic. Unlike most traditional painting surfaces, carpet allows the various media to fuse together, creating one evenly textured surface.

Hsu's oil paintings on wood, which portray delicately-painted white dogs enveloped in deep green forests, hang on the two remaining walls. Dogs are particularly resonant in the artist's life and a common motif in her work. Hsu took inspiration from Knut Hamsun's 1894 novel *Pan*, in which the protagonist lives alone in a forest with his dog Aesop, named after the ancient Greek fabulist. Hsu also named her dog Aesop. After her pet's recent passing, she had a recurring dream in which Aesop was looking into a pond at his own reflection; an image she repeats throughout her small-scale paintings.

Hsu self-published a zine, titled *moss garden pt 1: pond-love*, to accompany the exhibition. Complimentary copies will be available at the gallery.

Brook Hsu (b. 1987 in Pullman, Washington) Lives and works in New York. Hsu received her BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute in 2010 and her MFA from Yale University, New Haven in 2016. She has exhibited nationally and internationally including at the Renaissance Society (IL), Bahamas Biennale (MI), BBQLA (CA), Deli Gallery (NY), Double Double Land (Toronto, Canada), Carrie Secrist Gallery (IL), Galleri CC (Malmo, Sweden), GRIN Contemporary (RI), In Lieu (CA), Page (NY), Vacant Farm (MO), Vernon Gardens (CA).