

The Broad Channel Free Press

What's The Latest In Art? Topless Gallery Re-Opens Text by Dan Guarino

This Saturday, June 11, Topless art gallery opens with a brand new exhibition featuring artists Beverly Semmes and Larissa Bates. Topless was founded and is run by artists and curators Jenni Crain and Brent Birnbaum. For the past three years the pair has changed things up by presenting Topless in a new location each summer. The first year they opened in the brick former office building at Beach 91st Street and Rockaway Beach Boulevard, the present location of Zingara Vintage shop. Last summer their gallery opened in a nearly forgotten vintage Rockaway house at The Palms on Beach 95th Street.

They have been hard at work reworking the former tattoo parlor on at Rockaway Beach Boulevard and Beach 91st Street for Saturday's opening. Seemingly Topless, Crain and Birnbaum have come full circle. The new location is right across from where they started.

Below is Topless' announcement of their new season in Rockaway.

"I don't just write this stuff. I live here." –Dan G.

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Beverly Semmes & Larissa Bates at Topless
June 11 - June 26, 2016 | Opening Reception: Saturday, June 11, 6-9 PM

Topless is pleased to inaugurate its 3rd season with Larissa Bates & Beverly Semmes, a dual exhibition opening Saturday, June 11th, 2016.

Larissa Bates' intimate and jewel-like paintings are faceted reflections of crossing complex histories. The intricacies and details adapted from past, present and some sort of fantasy; simultaneously the artist's and civilization's own. The scenes segue between still life, landscape, and portraiture, cultivating the curiosities of and between cultural commodity and cultural identity. Her gold-leafed and gouache works ensnare the viewer in their richness, simultaneously dazzling with their unadulterated preciousness and disturbing with a darker intensity.

Beverly Semmes' Scratch is a large-scale new work configured specifically for this summer's space. A hovering form on the wall and a long velvet strip of gold squares bisects the room. Sinuous, meandering sleeves of blue and green become like paint lines, vines that sit on top of the golden length. The source of this river / sunset / flag / butterfly / flood of plush, saturated color appears to come out from the wall as it snakes across the floor and pushes onwards. Semmes is best known for large-scale fabric works that over recent years have become increasingly abstract. This current piece integrates aspects of both a dress and a landscape, in which symbolic and formal elements combine, and the recognizable shades off into otherness.