

**GINA RUGGERI**

February 23 – April 1, 2017

Reception: Thursday, February 23, 6-8pm

It is with great pleasure the Nancy Margolis Gallery is to present Gina Ruggeri's solo exhibition opening February 23 through April 1, 2017. **The reception for the artist will be held on Thursday, February 23, 6pm to 8pm.** NMG has had a long relationship with the artist covering a six-year span that began in 2011 with her first solo exhibition with the gallery. As the director of NMG, I have had the opportunity to observe closely her practice, her painting style, and not least her intense and thoughtful critical reflection. The body of work first introduced to me was her illusionary Mylar cutout paintings and related works on paper. Those Mylar paintings, large in scale, combined an exacting trompe l'oeil realism with imaginative installation. In this new body of work, Ruggeri significantly departs from illusionism and exactitude in favor of improvisation, indeterminacy, and continuously emerging possibilities.



Following her last solo show at NMG in 2011, Ruggeri made a conscious decision to forgo her earlier painting process in search of a new language. This required an upheaval of her approach, and she began an extended period of research and experimentation with different materials and methods. Through this intensive exploration, Ruggeri worked in a variety of surfaces and arrangements, eventually finding fertile territory in the form of the vivid works on display here. It is correct to identify this new work as painting, but to accurately classify it, it is important to describe more about the process. Sections of varied fabrics of multiple shapes and sizes are painted vibrantly with freehand patterns and pours, drawn upon, cut out, layered and collaged together. The suppleness of the fabric allows for twists or folds to be attached flat, in differing directions and topographies. In her free form collage method, contours of improvised cut shapes determine the works' forms and dimensions. The overall effect depends on color saturation, thickness of paint, compositional positioning and juxtaposition of one piece to the next. The end result is a painting assembled with spontaneity, without preconception, a complex abstract painting with a dimensional surface, rich in color, and attached as a tapestry might be, suspended loosely and slightly away from the wall.

Though these paintings are mature in their new expression, I suspect that the artist will look on them as starting points. It is in Ruggeri's character to not stay still, and to view her work in flux as she continues in her searching process.

**IMAGE:** *Housespace*, 2016, Acrylic and ink on cloth, 106" x 105"

**GINA RUGGERI**, received her MFA from the Yale School of Art, New Haven, CT and her BFA from The Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD. Recent exhibitions include solo shows at 101/Exhibit in Los Angeles in 2016, The Gallery @ 1GAP, Brooklyn, NY and Nancy Margolis Gallery, and a solo project at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT in 2010. Her awards include a 2010–2011 grant from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, and a 2008 NYFA fellowship in painting, a 2014 fellowship at Civitella Ranieri in Umbria, Italy, an Artist-in-Residence position at the Grand Canyon National Park, as well as fellowships at Yaddo, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Jentel, the Marie Walsh Sharpe Space Program, and the Lower East Side Printshop. She teaches at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, NY and SUNY-Purchase and lives and works in Brooklyn.