

# Vikky Alexander

## THE SPOILS OF THE PARK



*Gazelles at the Harrogate Baths, 2013*  
Digital ink jet on matte archival paper / 27.5" x 39.5"  
Edition of 3

### First UK Solo Exhibition by Vikky Alexander at Canada House in London

Vikky Alexander  
*The Spoils of the Park*  
March 1 - May 15, 2018  
Canada Gallery, Canada House, London, UK

Vernissage: Thursday, March 1, 2018, 6.00 pm - 8.30 pm  
Vikky Alexander in conversation with  
Nigel Prince, Executive Director, Contemporary Art Gallery  
Thursday March 1, 6.30 pm

Mark your calendars! In April of 2018 TrépanierBaer opens an exhibition of new and recent work by Vikky Alexander. And if you happen to be on the other side of the pond, you can see *Vikky Alexander: The Spoils of the Park*, the artist's first solo exhibition in the UK at Canada House in London opening March 1, 2018.

On invitation from the Canada Gallery at the High Commission of Canada to the United Kingdom, the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver is pleased to present the first UK solo exhibition by Vikky Alexander, a leading practitioner in the field of photo-conceptualism.

In the 1980s Alexander played a significant role in the group of artists now known as "The Pictures Generation", who posed a new set of questions concerning art and the nature of representation. The core of Alexander's artistic proposition lies in the fantastic - in both the literal and figurative senses of the words. While playful, she uses a variety of media and techniques to make her point: mirrors, photographic landscape murals, postcards collected on her travels, photography and video.

The title of the exhibition is taken from the 1882 book by Frederick Olmsted, who designed Mount Royal Park in Alexander's resident city of Montreal. Highlighting that the needs of the city's parks were always subservient to the needs of the political machine, this exhibition similarly explores conflicts between nature and culture, urging us to consider how the natural world is often there merely to service human civilization.

*The Spoils of the Park* comprises colour photographs and pencil/watercolour drawings that reflect Alexander's interest in histories of architecture and design, and focus on locations such as the opulent grandeur and interiors of European stately homes, places that speak to desire, aspiration and wealth.

Depicting surreal juxtapositions between the locations selected and the animals collaged into such scenarios, Alexander creates these works by overlaying one or more cutout images of toy animals onto postcards of lavish historical sites devoid of people. These constructed images ask us to consider a multiplicity of meanings. Blown up in scale and presented as colour photographs, we read the pixelated surfaces of the original postcard prints against the often ungainly scale of the animals. The grand interiors seen in *Deer in the Wallace Collection Study* (2013) or *Gazelles at the Harrogate Baths* (2013) for example, depict a world which reveals mankind's extreme affluence and consumption, contrasting to the comparatively modest use of resources by animals, to which wealth means very little.

In addition to this series of collages, Alexander presents a large-scale, black-and-white photo-mural adhered directly to the wall. Taken from her *Island Series* originally shot in 2010, the mural brings together several individual views of the exotic tropical plant greenhouses at Kew Gardens, which alongside other works, creates an immersive environment that raises questions concerning issues of how the more complex and affluent our societies become, the more we dominate the earth, annexing land, and the more we force nature to either adapt to artificial conditions or withdraw into ever-shrinking habitats.

*The Spoils of the Park* is generously supported by BC Arts Council and the High Commission of Canada to the United Kingdom. With special thanks to Anthony Cran and Naomi Wilding, and Yves Trépanier. The Canada Gallery's ongoing program is generously supported by the Dahdaleh Foundation, chaired by Victor Phillip Dahdaleh.

#### BIOGRAPHY:

Vikky Alexander lives and works in Montreal. Selected solo exhibitions include TrépanierBaer Gallery, Calgary (2017); Tomorrow Gallery, New York (2017); Cooper Cole, Toronto (2016); Trépanier Baer Gallery, Calgary; Atelier Daigneault/Schofield, Montreal (2015); Wilding Cran Gallery, Los Angeles; The Apartment, Vancouver (2014); The Engine Room Gallery, Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand (2010); National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (2000); Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (1999); Catriona Jeffries Gallery (1997); Vancouver Art Gallery (1992); Kunsthalle Bern (1990); and CASH/Newhouse Gallery, New York (1987).

Recent group exhibitions include Project Native Informant, London (2017); NGC @ MoCCA Project Space, Toronto (2015); Artist's Space, New York (2014); Museum for Gegenwartskunst, Basel, Switzerland; CultureGest, Lisbon, Portugal (2013); Presentation House Gallery, North Vancouver (2012); MuHKA, Antwerp, Belgium; Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax (2005); Yokohama Civic Art Gallery, Japan and Taipei, Korea; Seattle Art Museum (1996); The New Museum, New York (1992); Barbican Art Gallery, London (1991); and Whitney Museum of American Art (1990).

Her work is in many international public collections including National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Hammer Museum, UCLA, Los Angeles; Vancouver Art Gallery and Winnipeg Art Gallery. Alexander is represented by TrépanierBaer Gallery, Calgary; Wilding Cran, Los Angeles; Downs & Ross, New York; and Cooper Cole, Toronto.

Source: Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver