

# Site:Brooklyn Gallery

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Sarah Vanouwerkerk "01 \_Bodybuilder" Digital Inkjet Print

## Birthday Suit

Juried by Benjamin Sutton

At Site:Brooklyn Gallery

Opening Reception: Friday, March 15, 6–9pm

March 15–April 13, 2019

165 7th Street, Brooklyn, New York

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Since at least the 18th century, the expression “birthday suit” has been used to refer to nudity, and it rarely describes a private, quiet sort of nudity. Rather, as the phrase and its frequent uses intimate, to appear in one’s birthday suit requires that one be seen—and the more spectators, the better. There’s something distinctly theatrical about this type of undress. It is neither the contemplative nudity of the classically posed model in a life drawing class, nor a modest or timid type of nudity; it is exaggerated, embellished, celebratory, strange, attention-grabbing, and potentially alarming.

The artists whose works are featured in “Birthday Suit” are using nudity and the human body to underline and sometimes upend our expectations of how a body should appear or behave. Sometimes this playing with conventions is more formal, with exaggerated or distorted proportions, and surprising materials or colors serving to convey a sense of absence, discomfort, or delight. In other works, figures in their birthday suits confront the viewer in knowing poses and performances. In all of these works, the nude body has an assertive power: rather than standing in for some idealized and airbrushed perfect specimen, these birthday suited figures are reveling in the particularities of their bodies, their unique forms, folds, quirks, shades, and scars. These nudes are not passive; they’re bold, brash, and sometimes bawdy bodies that demand to be seen.

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#### About the Juror:

Benjamin Sutton is an art critic, journalist, and curator who lives in Park Slope. He is the News Editor at Artsy and his articles on public art, artist documentaries, the tedium of art fairs, and art crime have appeared there and in Hyperallergic, artnet, Brooklyn Magazine, Art+Auction, and elsewhere. He has curated exhibitions at the Lower East Side Printshop, Field Projects, the Spring Break Art Show, and the Gowanus Loft.

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#### Artists:

Corinne Beardsley, Amelia Borja, Berna Can Lustig, Brittany Chavez, Christine Chin, Jeanne Ciravolo, Caleb Cole, Anna Cone, Elise Drake, Carly Englander, Ari Eshoo, Christian Fagerlund, Ashley Gardner, Susan Grabel, Gwen Hardie, Devin Howell, Lauren Kalman, Krista LaBella, Yanqing Low, Karen Mainenti, Jennifer McCandless, Lisa McCleary, Alyssa McClenaghan, Rosemary Meza-DesPlas, Seungkyung Oh, Nancy Roy-Meyer, Christopher Smith, Meriel Stern, Elizabeth Tolson, Valeria Trucchia, Defne Tutus, Sarah Vanouwerkerk, Anna Warfield, Ella Weber, Cay Yoon

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#### Press

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