

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
29 AUGUST 2017

Mary Leunig and Renuka Rajiv
You Better Be On Fire

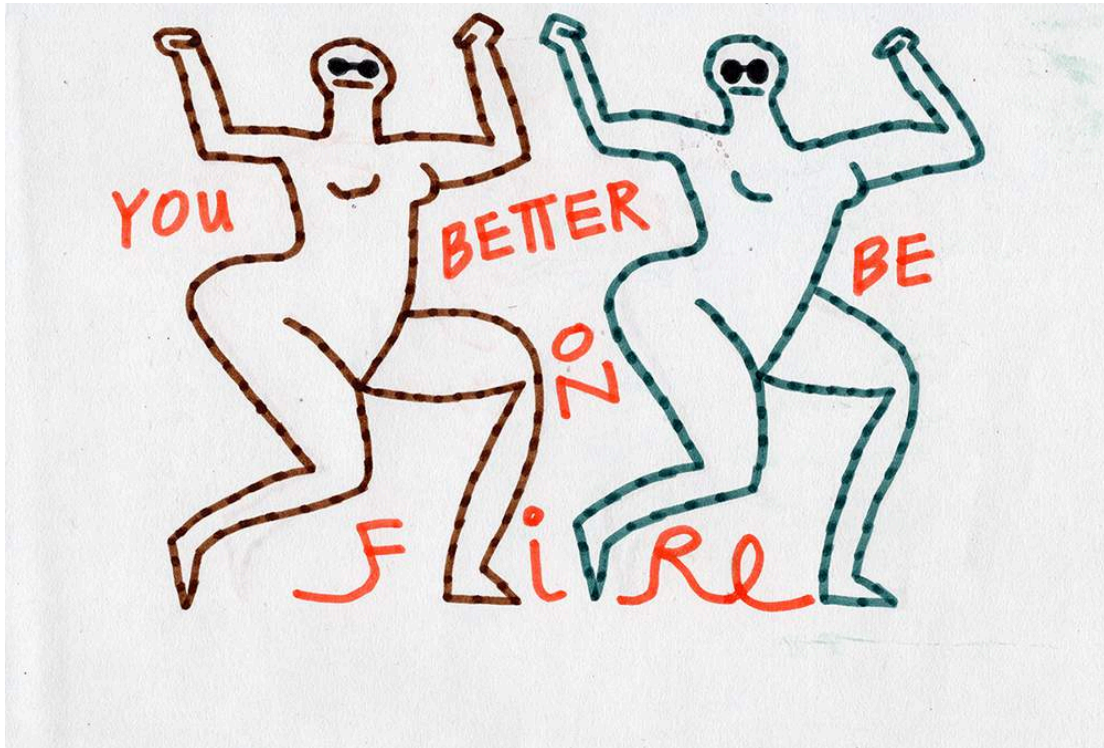


Image: Renuka Rajiv, *explo in mo*, 2017, animation

Neospace is pleased to present *You Better Be On Fire*, an exhibition curated by Louise Klerks showcasing recent works by contemporary artists Mary Leunig and Renuka Rajiv, from 8 to 29 September. The exhibition will feature new drawings from Leunig alongside Rajiv's monoprints, publications, zines and animations. Both are led by the impulse to create work that amplifies the everyday, the autobiographical, the unglamorous. While Leunig deals in human flesh and raw physicality, Rajiv conjures up abstract, mutated human/non-human forms. Their images dissect gendered and racialised stereotypes, privilege and classism with humour, directness and criticality. The works in *You Better Be On Fire* employ comic book conventions, symbolism, collaging and motifs as primary modes of visual expression – the practices of Leunig and Rajiv are committed to drawing, and a boldness in navigating controversial subject matter.



Image: Mary Leunig, *Untitled*, 2014, Pen, ink and watercolour on archival paper, 20 cm x 20 cm.

About the artists:

Mary Leunig works from her home-based studio in Merton, Victoria. Leunig's career has spanned a period of forty-five years, encompassing exhibitions, publications and commissioned social justice projects. She has often been represented in the media as a provocateur who deals in 'dark', 'bloody' and 'violent' imagery; however, the artist resists this categorisation and chooses instead to focus on deeply personal subject matter that is grounded in her lived experience as a mother, sister, woman and outsider artist. Leunig's strong sense of working-class identity is fundamental to her artistic practice. The artist has had the following books of drawings published: *There's No Place Like Home* (1982), *A Piece of Cake* (1985), *Trauts Heim* (1988), *One Big Happy Family* (1992) and *Black, White and Grey* (1995). Her artwork has featured in various newspapers and magazines, including *The Age*, *Nation Review*, *Meanjin*, *Heat Magazine*, *The Meatworkers Journal*, *Time*, *Penthouse*, *Der Rabe* and *AWU Magazine*. The State Library of Victoria houses a large collection of Leunig's drawings. See the artists website: <http://www.maryleunig.com>

Renuka Rajiv is an emerging artist from Chennai, India. Rajiv's works encompass sculpture, drawing, printmaking and film. The artist experiments with drawing through mediums such as paper mache, stitching, animation, portraiture and self-published books and zines. Recurring concerns include exploring the psychological space of bodily experience, repetition – both in practice and form, autobiographical fictions and drawing as non-fiction. Rajiv's zines feature interwoven textual and non-textual elements that riff on pop culture, magnify the mundane and interrogate gender as it is forced onto bodies. Renuka Rajiv has been part of group exhibitions in Australia and India. In 2016 and 2017, the artist held two solo exhibitions: *Big Hibernation* at Home Sweet Home in Bangalore and *Real Life Has So Much Light* at Stockroom, Kyneton. See the artist's blogspot: <http://pithbull.blogspot.com.au>

About the curator:

Louise Klerks is an independent curator, and the Founding Director of Chapter House Lane, a non-profit window-based gallery in Melbourne. Since 2008, Louise has curated exhibitions in commercial art galleries and non-profit spaces. During this time she has worked alongside individuals and community groups to deliver exhibitions, festival programs and special events. Louise Klerks hosts weekly life drawing classes in the CBD and is completing a Master of Art Curatorship at the University of Melbourne. See her website: <http://louiseklerks.com/>

Exhibition: 8 – 29 September 2017

Launch: Saturday 9 September, 2-4pm

Location: 7 Campbell Street, Collingwood VIC 3066

Opening hours: Monday-Friday 10am-5pm and Saturday 12-4pm (or by appointment)

Contact: contact@neospace.com.au

Telephone: 61 + (03) 9495 6774

Neospace is a commercial gallery in Melbourne exhibiting contemporary art through the presentation of curated group shows and solo exhibitions. Find out more at: <https://www.neospace.com.au>. Please contact Louise Klerks for media enquiries, interviews and images on 0404 118 105 or louise@chapterhouselane.org.au