

CHURNER *and* CHURNER

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Exhibition: **Karen Heagle**
Battle Armor

Dates: **May 8 – June 22, 2013**
opening reception: Wednesday, May 8, 6-8pm

Churner and Churner presents “Battle Armor,” an exhibition of new work by Karen Heagle. It is the artist’s first exhibition with the gallery.

In her bold and brash large-scale works on paper, Heagle uses gold and copper leaf, acrylic paint and colored paper to depict symbols of masculine pageantry. The works in this series are inspired by Heagle’s research into 17th-century genre paintings, particularly *memento mori* and *vanitas* paintings. Like her earlier work, which depicted animal carcasses, fruits, vegetables, and other symbolic props, these vivid paintings are direct confrontations of mortality and sexuality. As a queer artist who grew up in a strict Catholic family, Heagle employs religious imagery to expose a fascination with the forbidden. The iridescent hues and overcharged symbolic content – in this exhibition, peacocks, motorcycles, knights in armor, virgin and child breastplates – recall Pierre and Gilles’ highly stylized photographs. With “Battle Armor,” Heagle connects 17th-century iconography to contemporary practice.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Karen Heagle was born in Wisconsin. She earned her MFA at Pratt in 1995, and attended Skowhegan in 1997. She has had solo exhibitions at I-20 in New York and 31GRAND in Brooklyn. Her work has been included in group shows at the Weatherspoon Art Museum (2012); Brooklyn Academy of Music (2010); the Deste Foundation Centre for Contemporary Art, Athens, Greece (2006), among other institutions, as well as Allegra LaViola Gallery (2013, 2012); Invisible Exports, New York, and will be in the forthcoming exhibition “The Power of Paper” at Saatchi Gallery, London. Heagle’s work has been reviewed in *The New York Times*, *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *Time Out*, and *The New Yorker*, and other publications. Her work is in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Saatchi Gallery, London; the Deste Foundation for Contemporary Art, Athens; and the Fundación/Colección Jumex, Mexico City.

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