

JANE LOMBARD GALLERY

Carmen Neely

It makes it more so if you say so

February 23 – April 8, 2017

Jane Lombard Gallery is pleased to present *It makes it more so if you say so*, Carmen Neely's first solo show in New York. The exhibition will feature a series of recent paintings, drawings, and mixed media sculpture that continue Neely's exploration of gesture as object.

Neely's work—a combination of painting and found objects—is imbued with deep intention and awareness of her identity as a young black woman making art in the twenty-first century. "The mark", revered and mythologized as the purest form of artistic intention in the art historical canon, becomes an act of subtle subversion in Neely's paintings. Her own sexuality and female body appropriate the traditionally masculine gesture, and turn painting into an act of femininity. With each brushstroke, she pushes back against the status quo, inserting herself into a larger dialogue about signification in contemporary abstract painting.

In an effort to retain memories, events, conversations and people, Neely hoards objects as souvenirs. Paintings and drawings serve as means of 'visual paraphrasing', where a personal language of gestures and symbols embodies a distinct previous experience. These narratives undergo material translations – a painterly stroke becomes a three-dimensional clay form, then a flattened photographic image or laser-cut plexiglass shape – evolving the gesture into a tangible object to be collected.

Carmen Neely (b. 1987, Charlotte, NC) earned a MFA in studio art from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 2016, and a BFA in painting from The University of North Carolina at Charlotte in 2012. Recent exhibitions include *CONTEXTURE*, curated by Cey Adams, Jane Lombard Gallery, NY; *From the Fringe*, AIR Gallery, Brooklyn, NY; *Three-Fold*, Ghost Gallery, Seattle, WA. Neely lives and works in Greensboro, NC.