

**Gallery Notes**  
**Lynden Sculpture Garden**  
**July 13, 2020–September 27, 2020**

**ARIANA VAETH: NEW WORK**

All works by Ariana Vaeth (b. 1995, Baltimore) and courtesy of the artist.

**FRONT FOYER**

**North wall**

*Pattern Paintings, 2020*

Oil on canvas

12 x 12 inches each

(several groupings)

**GALLERY**

**(Counterclockwise from entrance.)**

**East Wall**

*Rose Garden, 2020*

Oil on canvas

36 x 60 inches

*Dye Party, 2019*

Oil on canvas

72 x 48 inches

**North Wall**

*PreGame, 2019*

Oil on canvas

72 x 48 inches

**West Wall**

*Henkhause Girls, n/d*

Oil on canvas

48 x 36 inches

*Sunroom Self Portrait, n/d*

Oil on canvas

24 x 24 inches

*Seanohan Brunch, n/d*

Oil on panel

11 x 14 inches

*New Year Reunion, 2020*

Oil on canvas

48 x 24 inches

### **ABOUT THE EXHIBITION**

Ariana Vaeth's autobiographical oil paintings chronicle formative relationships—primarily among young women—and honor the people most important to her in a given moment. Rooted in intimacy, “these paintings celebrate the generous closeness allowed by those I am privileged to know.”

Vaeth evokes these moments of closeness through staged, performative retellings. Preparatory photoshoots capture gestures and enable Vaeth to see herself as others see her—but her inclusion in the paintings restricts her agency: “I can never fully be director or actor when producing a composition.” Instead, she exchanges control for the serendipity found in interactions among trusted loved ones. Prior to painting, she reasserts that control, constructing the final composition from elements drawn from different photographs.

In addition to portraying her closest friends and herself, Vaeth constructs domestic spaces for them to inhabit. Defined by cramped perspectives and a modified bird's-eye view, these “by invitation only” settings are filled with props and patterns, each rug and curtain freighted with specific memories, each a piece in Vaeth's personal narrative. Bodies are depicted in a single plane, as if to equalize personalities—everyone's a diva in these paintings—amping up the compositional tension. Gestures—as in “Pre-Game”—appear to burst beyond the confines of the canvas. Facial expressions—as in “Rose Garden”—take on dramatic weight. “These are moments that are about to break,” says Vaeth. “They represent peaks—peaks that may come again, but may not.”

In the gallery, Vaeth displays seven recent paintings. (Outside the main gallery, Vaeth's love of pattern overflows in a series of 12 x 12-inch paintings exploring pattern and texture, another, non-figurative, index of Vaeth's memories.) These self-portraits, mostly with companions, find Vaeth participating in the rituals and inhabiting the environments of close friendship: talking, hanging out in kitchens and bathrooms, curled up on a couch. Make-up, hairbrushes, bottles of wine and local beer, bananas, pickles, abandoned coffee mugs, and the occasional dog are in evidence. And yet there is nothing mundane about these paintings, which instead convey intimacy—and especially the intimacy of young women—with an intensity that borders on the magical. Vaeth describes herself as “utilizing my most prized companions to build a piece of shelter.” In these new works she invites us, temporarily, into this glamorous, clamorous refuge.

### **Price list available upon request.**

Fifty percent of the proceeds of each sale will go to the Milwaukee Freedom Fund to be used to defend Chrystul Kizer, a young survivor of sex trafficking who currently faces murder charges for killing her trafficker in self-defense.

### **Call & Response**

Ariana Vaeth: *New Work* is part of Lynden's 2020 *Call & Response* programming. *Call & Response* is an ongoing project that gathers a community of artists who share a commitment to the radical Black imagination as a means to re-examine the past and imagine a better future. Other participants in the 2020 programming include indigo activist Arianne King Comer, filmmaker and storyteller Portia Cobb, chef and food scholar Scott Barton, choreographer Reggie Wilson, and sculptor Glenn Williams, among others. The 2020 Call & Response programming, some of which is virtual, has received generous support from the Brico Fund, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Mary L. Nohl Fund, and the Chipstone Foundation.

### **About the Artist**

Ariana Vaeth was raised in Baltimore and received her BFA from the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design. While an undergraduate, she participated in an exchange program with the Maryland Institute College of Art. Following graduation, Vaeth completed a studio based artist-in-residence program at her alma mater and then received a 2017 Greater Milwaukee Foundation Mary L Nohl Fund Fellowship in the Emerging Artist category. She was an inaugural recipient of Fellowship.art, a program modeled on Gener8tor's accelerator for creative entrepreneurs, and in February she received a Wisconsin Visual Art Achievement Award as a promising newcomer. Vaeth has exhibited in Milwaukee at the Portrait Society Gallery, the Charles Allis Museum, and the Haggerty Museum of Art; and in Chicago at Woman Made Gallery and the Museum of Science and Industry in the *Black Creativity* exhibition. Her work was selected for the 2019 Wisconsin Triennial at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art.