



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 22, 2021

November 12 — December 18, 2021

FooGayZee

New Paintings by John Avelluto

curated by Jeannine Bardo

Opening Reception: Friday, November 12th, 7-9 PM

Artist Talk: Saturday, December 11th, 3-4 PM

Stand4 Gallery
Community Art Center

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BAY RIDGE, BROOKLYN — “FooGayZee”, a phonetic misspelling of “Fugazi” an Italian-American slang word for “fake” that has no established derivation from the Italian language.

FooGayZee is John Avelluto’s second solo exhibition at Stand4. Avelluto’s work engages his background as both an Italian-American and native Brooklynite. This engagement via the lens of painting examines the tropes, both linguistic and visual, of these identities. Reflecting on the qualities of the acrylic medium, Avelluto aims to explore the plasticity of this phenomena. As shifts in language occur during displacement or rubbing up against new cultural entities, as do the possibilities within abstraction of the preceding visual cultures. Drawing from disparate art-historical traditions in tandem with pop-culture references, Avelluto sets out to play with, undermine, and confound Italian-American culture, toying with the existing linguistic and visual repertoire of vernacular references that all too often have gone under-appreciated and unexamined in painting.

For this exhibition Avelluto focused his attention on Italian-American pastries popular in the Southern Brooklyn areas he grew up and currently lives in, specifically/colloquially the “seven-layer” or “rainbow” “cookie”. Not a cookie per se, more than a few hues short of a rainbow and technically, yes, seven layers, this almond-based sweet is an invention of Italian-Americans here as a representation of their heritage through the three-color format of the Italian flag. It is in both its transcultural misinterpretation and its formal qualities that Avelluto

draws the premise for much of the work in exhibition, finding antagonism between Italian artistic, national and linguistic historical imports and popular vulgar American conceptions of those phenomena in order to stretch a known form beyond its "original" guise.

John Avelluto currently lives and works in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. He received his MFA at CUNY Brooklyn College where he studied with Elizabeth Murray, Vito Acconci, William T Williams and Jennifer McCoy.

john-avelluto.com

Stand4

Founded in January 2017 as an artist-run initiative, Stand4's pursuit is to be alive and working towards a better world through the arts as an active medium of engagement. Stand4 serves as a generator of meaning, action, agency, collaboration, and social justice. It is shapeless, non-conforming, and responsive to the times. Stand4 is meant to exist as a catalyst: a way to envision a more socially and environmentally just future. Housed in a former medical office in the heart of Bay Ridge, Stand4 brings the visual arts and programming to the center of the community, opening up opportunities for social, political and cultural connections and creating a discourse that bridges culture and tradition and includes new voices towards a more sustainable future inspired by local interests.

Location / Stand4 Gallery and Community Art Center
414 78th Street, 1st Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11209

Website / stand4gallery.org
Facebook / [@stand4bayridge](https://www.facebook.com/stand4bayridge)
Instagram / [@stand4gallery](https://www.instagram.com/stand4gallery) [@johnavelluto](https://www.instagram.com/johnavelluto)

Hours / Saturday, 12-3 PM & by appointment.
Contact Jeannine Bardo to schedule an appointment.
Proof of vaccination is required and masks must be worn when visiting the gallery.

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