



Stand4 Gallery
Community Art Center

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Brooklyn, NY 11209
stand4gallery.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EXHIBITION

Emergent Strategies

In Defense of Weeds

New work by Kariann Fuqua

January 18 - March 1, 2025

BAY RIDGE, BROOKLYN, NY - Americans wage relentless chemical warfare on soil each year, dousing lawns, gardens, and parks with 90 million pounds of herbicides and pesticides annually. These toxins rip through our bodies and ecosystems, all in service to an artificial construct: the perfect, manicured grass lawn, a relic of British aristocracy that flaunted wealth through perfectly controlled nature.

Kariann Fuqua is an artist who explores the connection between chaos and control in the natural world. In her upcoming exhibition *Emergent Strategies: In Defense of Weeds* at Stand4 Gallery in Brooklyn, Fuqua examines the juxtaposition between the idealized capitalist American lawn and the overgrown diversified pollinator yard.

Fuqua postulates that a green monoculture benefits no species but ourselves, while most American lawns sit unused. This human need to control the environment comes at a steep ecological cost. The extraction from the land primarily serves capitalism as people spend money and their future health by spraying chemicals to eliminate plants, which many consider weeds: wild plants growing where they are unwanted.

Through a year of patient observation, documentation, and research of the “weeds” that grow in her yard, she’s begun viewing them as teachers instead of trespassers. They are beneficial food sources for many species (ourselves included), add nutrients to and aerate soils, and diversify the ecosystem. So why do they remain so divisive? What might weeds teach us about mutual benefit or interdependence? Like the dandelion, can they be a sign of resilience, showing us a path forward through our rapidly expanding ecological crisis? To survive our constantly changing climate, weeds might offer insight into adaptability, resilience, regeneration, and hope for a future existence – if we are willing to notice.

The title of this exhibition is derived from the book *Emergent Strategy* by Adrienne Marie Brown. She defines Emergent Strategy as “how we intentionally change in ways that grow our capacity to embody the just and liberated worlds we long for.” This installation of drawings, photographs, and collected objects from one acre of land in Mississippi investigates the power of small actions and shifts in attention, changing the relationship with the land one plant at a time.

This opportunity is made possible through the Individual Artist Career Opportunity Grant, a program of South Arts and by The Puffin Foundation, Ltd

Stand4 Gallery is open Saturdays, 12:00-3:00 PM and by appointment.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Kariann Fuqua (b. 1976, Oklahoma) is an abstract artist utilizing drawing, painting and collage. She received a BFA in painting from Kansas State University and an MFA in painting from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Her work has been widely exhibited in solo and group shows across the United States including Jenkins-Johnson Gallery (San Francisco, CA), Governors Island (New York, NY), Hyde Park Art Center (Chicago, IL), Byron Cohen Gallery (Kansas City, MO), Manifest Gallery and Drawing Center (Cincinnati, OH), Athens Institute of Contemporary Art (Athens, GA) and was awarded a public commission at McCormick Place (Chicago, IL). She received a Joan Mitchell Foundation full fellowship to the Vermont Studio Center, an Individual Artist Fellowship from the Mississippi Arts Commission, and her work was published in *New American Paintings* and the *Artist's Magazine*. She currently lives and works in Oxford, Mississippi where she is an Instructional Assistant Professor of Art and Director of Museum Studies at the University of Mississippi.

ABOUT STAND4 GALLERY

Founded in January 2017 as an artist-run initiative, Stand4 Gallery and Community Art Center'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 Arts Center
414 78th Street, 1st Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11209

Website /stand4gallery.org
Facebook /@stand4bayridge
Instagram /@stand4gallery #emergentstrategies
#stand4gallery #kariannfuqua

Hours /Saturday, 12-3PM and by appointment.
Contact/ Contact Jeannine Bardo to schedule an appointment.
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