

# Galerie Sébastien Bertrand

We are pleased to announce Lydia Pettit's (1991, Maryland) first solo show at the gallery.

Her materials range from large expressive oil paintings, to intimate, figurative embroideries within quilts which create new realities spanning painting, textile, and sculpture. Pettit's paintings explore the experience of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and the politics of the body, using self-portraiture as a vehicle to process and communicate. The body is a host to trauma and becomes a battleground in itself in the push and pull between recovery and regression, love and disgust, tenderness and callousness. To live with PTSD is to be a haunted house; spectres of the past infiltrate the house... *Who's there?* Turn the corner and suddenly, a flash of fear, pain, creeping dread and shame. The textile pieces capture this eerie experience using disjointed compositions, mixed materials, and textures including patchwork, hand embroidery, and both flat and raised quilting. It speaks to the dark comedy of living with mental illness, the ups and the downs, and the complications of recovery. Her works are confrontational depictions of her own inward gaze, forcing the viewer to reckon with the realities of her body and mind, and their own viewpoints on the struggles women face with sexual abuse, trauma, body politics, and mental health.

*"Under the house there is a cellar, in the cellar I built a well, inside the well is the grassy ditch where I awoke, the knot in my stomach as I approached the facade of St. Paul, the sound of the blue door on John Street, the mirror self that caresses my flaws, the shame cast upon me, the trust I laid to rest. Sometimes it escapes, enveloping the house, other times I forget it's even there."*

- Lydia Pettit