

jack fischer gallery

Donna Ruff
utopia

January 11 – February 15, 2020
Opening reception: Saturday, January 11, 5 – 7 p.m.

Minnesota Street Project
1275 Minnesota Street, San Francisco, CA 94107



Fanaticism p. 117, 2019, burn on book pages, 7.5" x 7.5"

Jack Fischer Gallery is pleased to present *utopia*, a solo exhibition by Miami based artist **Donna Ruff**. Join us at our new space in **Minnesota Street Project**, suite 201, for the opening reception on January 11, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. The show will be up through February 15, 2020.

In this upcoming exhibition, Ruff will be showing a series of burned paper pieces titled *The Federalist Papers Undone*, which recreates individual pages of the Federalist Papers using typical circa 1700s font with text from the original document, found on the Library of Congress's website. For this work, Ruff used a laser cutter to burn the text through a sheet of white paper outlining each letter with the brownish residue of burnt paper.

Ruff will also be exhibiting *La Prensa*, a series of large fabric pieces with transferred newspaper photographs of Mexican and Central American migrant children and their parents

on their journey to the U.S. Ruff appropriates these images, shifts the colors, enlarges and prints them onto fabric. Afterwards she cuts and perforates the fabric. The back of each piece is then spray painted lightly with red ink to cast pink shadows on the wall.

The artist states: "My grandparents had a scrap paper business in Chicago. When I was very young I would occasionally go to the warehouse with my parents, and my grandmother used to save encyclopedias from the shredder by taping the pages back together. Sometimes the pages were illegible, but I knew that books were important. My grandmother's careful labor became embedded in these objects.

My own work has the traces of my ancestry in its labor intensity. I've cut and burned paper, taken books apart and put them back together again, cut lacy patterns in newspaper pages, intending to draw attention to details and creating new meanings with the interplay of positive and negative space. I live in Miami and I'm particularly interested in immigration issues, as immigrants make up a large part of our population.

As the global situation has devolved, I have become more and more committed to making work that brings attention to social justice issues. The system of campaign contributions went through a seismic change when the *Citizens United* case was ruled on by the Supreme Court. Corporations were given the right to contribute to candidates the same way as individuals, leading to the formation of Super PACs-highly partisan, well-funded organizations that greatly determine the outcome of elections. That decision was based partly on the First Amendment and James Madison's contribution to the Federalist Papers. I became curious about these documents, written largely by Alexander Hamilton, with some participation by Madison and by John Jay. What I found was that these three men anticipated the corruption, foreign influence, and partisanship that we are now experiencing. Our history reveals that there have often been dark and cynical motives to our actions, so perhaps we can allow ourselves hope that the current destruction of our values will not be irreversible."

About the artist:

Donna Ruff lives and works in Miami, FL. Ruff has shown in solo and group exhibitions such as at the Patricia and Philip Frost Art Museum, Florida International University, Miami, FL; San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles, San Jose, CA; Bedford Gallery, Walnut Creek, CA; Rick Wester Fine Art, New York, NY; Laundromat Art Space, Miami, FL; Williamsburg Art & Historical Center, Brooklyn, NY; Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum, Mesa, AZ; Center for Contemporary Art and the New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe, NM; Zikha Gallery at Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT; BAC Gallery, Brooklyn, NY. Her work is included in the collections of the Victoria & Albert Museum, Morgan Library, Smith College, Yale Art Museum, Library of Congress, Zimmerli Art Museum, and many others. She received her MFA from Rutgers University, an MA from Florida State University, and a BA from the University of Miami.

Jack Fischer Gallery
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1275 Minnesota Street
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Tues. - Sat. 11:00 - 5:30 p.m. & by appointment
*First Saturdays open until 8:00 p.m.

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