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PRESS RELEASE:

(Front gallery)

Sangram Majumdar: *Offspring*

(Rear gallery)

Kurt Knobelsdorf: *Civita*

October 10 - November 11, 2018

Opening Reception:

Wednesday, October 10th, 6 - 8pm



Sangram Majumdar, *Giacometti's Shadow*,
2018, oil on linen, 40 x 33

SHFAP presents two exhibitions in October. In our front gallery, we present OFFSPRING, an exhibition of recent paintings by Sangram Majumdar.

In this new body of work, Majumdar returns to working with the figure as a primary motif. These paintings and works on paper evolve Majumdar's interest in exploring the hidden, the peripheral, and the in-between. They purposely resist direct interpretation, inviting us to slow down, embrace ambiguity, and trust our senses.

The works began as much by trying to give form to the political anxiety in this country as by watching his daughter learn to walk. This striding gesture reminds one of ancient sculptures, Muybridge's photographs, Giacometti's sculptures or *DON'T WALK* signs.

Majumdar's new paintings are built from drawings, and collages made from watching bits of home videos. He works intuitively, revising entire paintings multiple times. This process lends his works a tangible sense of simultaneity. Frequently he employs conventions from the representational and abstract modes of painting in eastern and western art. He is working to synthesize his own complex relationship with history and a renewed investment in figuration, both symbolic and personal.

This is Majumdar's fourth solo exhibition at Steven Harvey Fine Art Projects. In the course of that, he has traversed a broad pictorial range, from highly accomplished representational paintings to increasingly abstract images all the while grounded in direct observation. John Yau wrote about Majumdar's work, "It seems to me that Majumdar is after that moment of seeing which occurs just before we name the object, event or experience and begin looking for the next thing, whatever it is... I see this as a risky gambit as well as a conscious challenge to a media-besotted world that revels in names and naming, as if somehow everything can be accounted for, safely categorized and subsequently copied."

Majumdar has been a Professor of Painting at the Maryland Institute College of Art since 2003. In 2017, he had a survey exhibition at Asia Society Texas Center in Houston, Texas.

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Kurt Knobelsdorf, *The Old Corner Spot*, 2018,
oil on foamcore with string and dried glue, 12 x 12

In our rear gallery, we present new and earlier paintings by Kurt Knobelsdorf, in an exhibition titled CIVITA.

Civita is a tiny Italian village where Knobelsdorf taught painting last summer. His new landscapes veer between this vertiginous ancient village and the decaying architecture of North Philadelphia where he recently set up his studio.

The buildings Knobelsdorf paints in Philadelphia twist and curve like Soutine's houses. Their organic aspect links them to his overgrown Italian roads. In fact Knobelsdorf is a kind of scholar of the road. His paintings appear as though they might contain earth from landscape he paints. There is a ferocious touch and acuity to his descriptive painting. No niceties are taken. Description is summary, thickly built up, yet highly articulated.

Knobelsdorf has worked peripatetically from Florida to Philadelphia, from Detroit to Israel and Italy. Simultaneously, he explores the wide open landscape of the popular imagination. He is a channeler of images, working both with found sources and from nature.

In 2014, his work was included in the 2014 Invitational Exhibition of Visual Arts at The American Academy of Arts and Letters, where he received an award and a museum purchase prize sending two works to the Woodmere Museum near Philadelphia.

The most important collection of his work resides in the William Louis-Dreyfus Foundation. Dreyfus collected over twenty of Knobelsdorf's small panels. William Benton writes about Knobelsdorf in "Eye Contact," a new collection of his art criticism, "The pictures are small, the size of a Ryder, and as eccentric. They resemble outsider work, but are too skillfully made to be thought of in that way, too alert to the stresses and poise of their originality."

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