

# ROBERTS PROJECTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 26, 2019

Celeste Rapone  
*Future Amateur*  
September 14 - October 12, 2019  
Opening Reception: September 14<sup>th</sup>, 6-8pm



Celeste Rapone *Managing at Sports Clips*, 2019  
Oil on canvas, 48 x 54 in (121.9 x 137.2 cm)

Roberts Projects is pleased to present *Future Amateur*, a new show by Chicago-based artist Celeste Rapone. Through her paintings, Rapone invokes the willing suspension of disbelief, the engagement of suspicion, except of certain sorts, aligned along particular interests or ideas shared with, or communicated to us by, the characters she portrays. Initially conceived as coping mechanisms for a future as a failed painter, Rapone's portraits now tap into consequences of exposure: humiliation, vulnerability, self-doubt and self-deprivation.

Her autobiographical characters – most often women – are proxies to her discomfort felt at new ideas and approaches, the doubt in her own representation and object-making, her inability to mediate success once exposed to it, and the abstract possibilities opened up and emphasized by these failures.

The women twist and turn in the picture plane, unapologetically voluminous and on display. They have presence. They take up space. Fully exposed, this display is at times uncomfortable. The rare male figure is more accessory than protagonist.

Placed in situational circumstances ranging from the very ordinary – enjoying one's own company with a drink – to the subliminally ridiculous – running in athleisure with wild birds – Rapone's subjects are however linked in their commitment to their assigned task. The gulf separating understanding and experience resonates in much of Rapone's imagery and process. Each task necessitates the use of specific clothing, color, adornment and surface qualities, to the extent that the characters become obscured within their environment. This self-deprecating approach defines the intentional openness and mutability of meaning she has built into her practice. Visual harmonies, however imperfect, are the result.

Referencing Dutch Golden Age painting, Cubism, Chicago Imagists, and 1980's Figuration, alongside her Italian Catholic North Jersey upbringing, Celeste Rapone's autobiographical portraits consider each of these histories as they express a commitment to mundane rituals. These narratives of anticipation, doubt, and navigation of the unknown act doubly as a metaphor for painting itself.

Celeste Rapone (b. 1985) was raised in Wayne, New Jersey. She received her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2007 and her MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2013. Her work has been shown at Roberts Projects, Corbett vs. Dempsey in Chicago, Steven Zevitas Gallery in Boston, The Hyde Park Art Center, and the Georgia Museum of Art, and Monya Rowe Gallery in New York. Her work has been featured in *New American Paintings*, *New City*, *The Chicago Tribune*, and *The Georgia Review*, and she is a 2018 recipient of a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant. Rapone is a Lecturer in the Painting and Drawing Department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She lives and works in Chicago, IL.

*Future Amateur* is the artist's first solo show with the gallery.

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For additional information, please contact Camille Weiner at +1.323.549.0223, [camille@robertsprojectsla.com](mailto:camille@robertsprojectsla.com).

Gallery hours are Tuesday - Saturday, 11:00am - 6:00pm.

Roberts Projects is located between Fairfax Avenue and La Cienega Boulevard.

Parking is available on the street and at Dunn Edwards located 1/2 block east of the gallery.