

For Immediate Release

SALLY

Project Curators: Sasha Chavchavadze and JoAnne McFarland

Exhibition Dates: September 8—October 15, 2022

Location: The Brickbottom Gallery, 1 Fitchburg St, Somerville, MA

Reception: Sunday, September 11th, 3–5 pm

July 2022: The Brickbottom Gallery and Brickbottom Artists Association are pleased to announce SALLY, an interdisciplinary project conceived by artist/collaborators JoAnne McFarland and Sasha Chavchavadze. The project will be on view at The Brickbottom Gallery September 8—October 15, 2022, with a reception for the artists to be held in the gallery on Sunday, September 11th, from 3–5 pm.

DNA evidence confirms that Sarah ‘Sally’ Hemings and Thomas Jefferson had several children together. While a teenager in France with Jefferson’s family, Hemings had a chance at full freedom, but returned to America with Jefferson in 1791 when he was 47 years old. Many historians believe Hemings was already pregnant with her first child by Jefferson when she returned. She lived out most of her life as a slave on Jefferson’s Monticello plantation, in quarters adjacent to his that have recently been restored.

SALLY, a collaborative project, brings together artists, writers, historians, and the local community intrigued by the narratives of women, like Sally Hemings, whose destinies are inextricably interwoven with those they knew, and whose lives have often been erased or forgotten.



Canary, by Desmond Beach

At this critical juncture, with women’s autonomy once again under siege, another meaning of sally seems particularly relevant: *a sudden charge out of a besieged place*. A primary theme in SALLY is how artists, through their methodologies, confront myriad issues of agency, and use collaboration to undercut the status quo, and construct lives of integrity and purpose.

SALLY began in the fall of 2019 at three Brooklyn, NY locations. Due to its popularity and relevance to contemporary challenges, Sasha and JoAnne have traveled the project to other community venues. SALLY adapts to each new location, drawing on the community for participants and historical women to highlight.

For SALLY at Brickbottom, in the main gallery, sixteen artists from diverse backgrounds with varied aesthetic concerns respond to this complex contemporary moment. In the smaller gallery, Sasha Chavchavadze, one of SALLY’s curators, presents a multimedia installation centered on the life and work of Margaret Fuller (1810 – 1850), journalist, editor, critic, and translator, who wrote the first American book on women’s rights. Presented for the first time near the place of her birth and early life, the installation reactivates the pathos and power of Fuller’s erased voice, silenced by a shipwreck off Fire Island in

1850, and by her male colleagues.

About The Brickbottom Artists Association and The Brickbottom Gallery: The Brickbottom Artists Association is one of the oldest living and working artists communities in the United States. Founded in 1987 by residents of the Brickbottom Artists Building, the BAA today welcomes both resident and non-resident artists and supporting members. The Brickbottom Gallery, established in 1989, presents exhibitions as Somerville's premiere not-for-profit contemporary art gallery, showcasing both established and emerging artists.

SALLY Brickbottom Participants: Desmond Beach, Sasha Chavchavadze, Phyllis Ewen, Kathryn Geismar, Jee Hwang, Elise Kaufman, Kelly Knight, Carole Kunststadt, JoAnne McFarland, Susie Nielsen, Debra Olin, James Patterson, Ellen Shattuck Pierce, Janice Redman, Sarah Riley, Susan Schmidt, Amani Willett.



JoAnne McFarland & Sasha Chavchavadze

About the SALLY Curators:

Sasha Chavchavadze is the founder of Footnote, a project space in Brooklyn, NY that uses art to focus on forgotten history, and Proteus Gowanus, an interdisciplinary exhibition/event space that was a cultural hub in Brooklyn for ten years. Her other public projects, including SALLY, Museum of Matches, and Carnival of Connectivity, reconnect art to other disciplines and to the community. Her mixed media paintings, drawings and installations have been exhibited internationally, including: Katonah Museum of Art; Luise Ross Gallery, Cooper Union Gallery; Rotunda Gallery; Kentler International Drawing Space; Arkansas Art Center; Museum of Literature, Tbilisi, Georgia. Her work has been presented in MoMA workshops, TedxGowanus and on BRIC TV. She has published in Cabinet, Bomb and NYFA Current magazines, and as a book (Museum of Matches, Proteotypes, 2011). Her Margaret Fuller Project was initiated as a Visiting Artist at the American Academy in Rome.

JoAnne McFarland is an artist, poet, and curator, and is the Artistic Director of Artpoetica Project Space in Brooklyn which exhibits work that focuses on the intersection of language and visual representation. McFarland has artwork in the permanent collections of The Library of Congress, The Columbus Museum of Art, and The Department of State, among many others. Recent shows include: Best & Brightest and The Indivisible Spectrum, both at The Painting Center in NYC. A graduate of Princeton University, McFarland's poetry collections include: Acid Rain, 13 Ways of Looking at a Black Girl, and Identifying the Body. Her latest multimedia collection, Pullman, will be published by Grid Books in 2023. McFarland has had fellowships at The BARD Graduate Center Library, KALA Art Institute, and The National Arts Club.

For more information contact:

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