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For immediate release

**CHARLOTTE
STREET
FOUNDATION**

Charlotte Street Foundation and Royal NoneSuch Gallery Present Basic Essentials this Friday, May 11 at La Esquina Gallery

Kansas City, MO, May 7, 2018: Charlotte Street Foundation is proud to partner with **Royal Nonesuch Gallery** of Oakland, CA to present **Basic Essentials** in **La Esquina Gallery** from Friday, May 11, 2018 through Saturday, June 23, 2018. This “*KC/Oakland Exchange*” will feature three artists from Kansas City and three artists from the Bay Area, including Mark Benson, Brandon Forrest Frederick, Mik Gaspay, Roaming Center for Magnetic Alternatives, Laura Rokas, and Will Toney.

The **opening reception** for Basic Essentials takes place in La Esquina (1000 W. 25th Street, Kansas City Missouri) on **Friday, May 11** from **6:00 PM to 9:00 PM**. The event is free and open to the public. Free refreshments will be provided. After the initial showing from May through June in Kansas City, *Basic Essentials* will move to Oakland and will be featured in Royal NoneSuch Gallery in Oakland, California. Basic Essentials part 2, will open at Royal NoneSuch in Oakland on July 14, 2018.



(Brandon Forrest Frederick, Family Size, 2018)

“The motivation for this show originated from a desire to start a dialog between artists working in the Bay Area and Kansas City,” said Zoë Taleporos, the exhibition’s curator. “Having visited KC a couple of times, it was clear that there were a lot of crossovers between the art communities, and I was wondering how that played out in the kind of art being made. Both places contend with being categorized as regional, which has its benefits in creating close-knit and supportive art scenes. But there is also a disadvantage to regionalism in terms of the limited opportunities to show work, expand networks, and potentially have different kinds of dialog. My goal for the exhibition was to find commonality in subject matter and/or approach between artists to begin a new conversation and opportunities for different perspectives to be experienced.”



Kansas City's Arts Provocateur
1000 W 25th Street KC MO 64108

Basic Essentials is an exhibition about objects - how they are used to construct identity, create a sense of belonging or isolation, offer or deprive us of agency. The six participating artists, Mark Benson (OAK), Brandon Forrest Frederick (KC), Mik Gaspay (OAK), Roaming Center for Magnetic Alternatives (KC), Laura Rokas (OAK), and Will Toney (KC) all experiment with materials and forms to reveal moments when common things are imbued with larger cultural significance. Working across methods of representation that include still lifes, trompe l'oeil, home movies, arte povera, and readymades, the artists in *Basic Essentials* examine how objects, and the various economies they represent, attempt to define who we are and how we are meant to be.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Zoë Taleporos is an arts administrator, curator, and writer based in Oakland, CA. She currently works as a **Public Art Project Manager at the San Francisco Arts Commission** where she is involved in commissioning a wide range of artworks for public spaces. Formerly, she was a Co-Director/Curator of two alternative art galleries - Royal NoneSuch Gallery in Oakland, CA and Queen's Nails Projects in San Francisco, CA. As an independent curator, she has implemented exhibitions and public programs for Pro Arts, Oakland, CA; Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA; Real Time and Space, Oakland, CA; S.H.E.D. Projects, Oakland, CA; California College of the Arts, San Francisco, CA; and Triple Base Gallery, San Francisco, CA. Her writing has been published by KQED Arts, Art Practical, and MIT Press. She received her MA in Curatorial Practice from California College of the Arts.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Mark Benson is a procrastinator dealing with a fickle work ethic. On some days he plows through mountains of tasks and to-dos, while more often his "efforts" end fruitlessly with him staring at his phone or looking for any excuse to snack. His work reflects this shortcoming in ways that are at once obtuse and veiled. It seeks examples authored by unknown protagonists that seem to be focused on minute escapes or recreations that allow them to momentarily forget the monkey on their backs, be that their job, love life (or lack thereof), or art practice. The work that materializes from these breaks can be darker than expected.

Mark Benson was born in Denver, CO in 1978. He received his MFA from California College of the Arts in 2011, and has exhibited nationally and internationally. He lives and works in Oakland, CA.

Brandon Forrest Frederick is an interdisciplinary artist, educator, and organizer based in Kansas City, Missouri. He received his BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute in 2011. His visual practice incorporates photography, video, zine-making, and sculpture to explore our modern society and the human-built structures that exist within. In addition to, and in collaboration with, his studio practice Brandon works as an arts organizer which has materialized projects such as: The Roost Gallery, Archive Collective, Come Here, Build ____ . and Open House.

His work has been shown locally and nationally. In 2017 he was selected for a public billboard commission through Missouri Bank and the Charlotte Street Foundation.

Mik Gaspay (b. 1976 in Quezon City, Philippines) lives and works in San Francisco.

Gaspay received his MFA from California College of the Arts in 2011. Gaspay has had a solo exhibition at Alter Space Gallery in San Francisco. He has also participated in various group shows in museums and spaces including the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, Art Gallery at the University of Hawaii in Hilo, WhiteBox Gallery in New York. Gaspay was awarded a commission by the Chinese Culture Center in San Francisco for a permanent public art installation in San Francisco Chinatown's Portsmouth Square Bridge.

A Florida native, **Kendell Harbin** relocated to Kansas City, MO in 2009 to attend the Kansas City Art Institute. With an education rooted in Art History and Printmaking studies, Kendell's practice is informed by media and communication politics. Since this time Kendell has been an artist in residence at Ox-Bow

School of Art and Artist Residencies (Saugatuck, MI), FLOAT (St.Louis, MO), and Signal Culture (Owego, NY). With support from the Mid-America Arts Alliance, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Windgate Charitable Foundation, Inc, Kendell is currently developing an ad hoc vhs media and research center exploring the correlation between queer history and a medium on the edge of obsolescence. Visit roamingcenter.org for more info.

Although she identifies primarily as a painter, **Laura Rokas** plays with the dimensionality of her subjects as they travel through other media such as ceramics, textiles and video. She received her MFA at the San Francisco Art Institute in 2016 where she was awarded the Graduate Fellowship, the Murphy and Cadogan Award, the Alan B Stone Painting Scholarship and the Anne Bremer Award. Laura has been shown internationally in Canada and the United States, including at the National Gallery of Canada, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Toronto, the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art, CTRL-SHFT Collective, R/SF Projects, and is anticipating her second solo exhibition at Guerrero Gallery July 2018. A three-time recipient of the Elizabeth Greenshields Grant, Laura was also awarded an endowment from the Québec Council for the Arts, and most recently was a finalist in the 2017 Royal Bank of Canada painting competition. Born in Québec, she now lives and works in San Francisco.

William Toney is from Raytown, Missouri. He holds a B.F.A. with an emphasis in photography from the University of Missouri - Columbia in 2012. He currently lives and makes mixed media work in Kansas City, MO.

ABOUT ROYAL NONESUCH GALLERY

Royal NoneSuch Gallery is an artist-run alternative art and event space located in the Temescal district of Oakland, California. We are dedicated to creating community around art-based experiences that are thought provoking and conceptually rigorous, while also being accessible and fun. Through a framework of monthly exhibitions and related programs, we strive to maintain a dynamic schedule in which the gallery is continuously reinvented to reflect the spirit and process of an artist, specific program series, or collaboration.

The Royal NoneSuch Gallery is not motivated by commercial interests, but instead by working with other artists and creators to facilitate experimentation and social engagement through monthly exhibitions and events. We encourage artists to translate their studio practice, not only into a month-long installation, but into a social context that allows the public to actively connect with the central concepts and ideas of the exhibition through opportunities for participation. We take active responsibility for being part of an emerging art scene in Oakland by encouraging an atmosphere of creative risk taking from artists and participation from the community, aiming always for public experiences that are inclusive, innovative, and educational. Visitors to Royal NoneSuch can expect to see, hear, learn, experiment, and participate.

ABOUT CHARLOTTE STREET

Charlotte Street identifies the needs and fuels the evolution of an ever-changing multidisciplinary arts ecosystem, acting as its primary provocateur. Charlotte Street cultivates the contemporary, the exceptional, and the unexpected in the practice of artists working in and engaging with the Kansas City art community. Since 1997, Charlotte Street has distributed over \$1.1 million in awards and grants to artists and their innovative projects and connected individual artists to each other and to the greater Kansas City community. For more information about Charlotte Street, its awards, programs, and initiatives, visit www.charlottestreet.org.

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