

ROCKET SCIENCE



Idris Habib, *Summer-Yellow*, 2020, print on paper, 16" x 16"

Survivors

November 14th – December 14th, 2020

170 East 2nd street, New York, NY 10009

Opening Reception: Saturday, November 21st, 12pm – 8pm

I feel like art in all forms will conquer human segregation in this world.

– Idris Habib

Rocket Science is pleased to present *Survivors*, an exhibition of works by **Idris Habib**, **Courtney Mendenhall**, **Luke Silva** and **Maria Petrovskaya**, opening this Saturday, November 21st, at 170 east 2nd street.

This diverse group of artists hails from three different continents and represents demographic groups that feel particularly vulnerable: people of color, immigrants, women and members of the LGBTQ community. Recent years have pulled away a shroud of normalcy to expose sinister realities that these artists already know too well: racial and gender inequality, chronic prejudice and discrimination. No longer able to be swept under the carpet, these realities must now be confronted head on by people of the world who would otherwise have the luxury to ignore them.

As we all contemplate the act of survival in adverse circumstances, NYC has become the battleground in our fight against many things – not just Covid-19 and physical survival, but emotional survival as well. We must fight to continue making, showing and seeing art in real life, as an essential component of human existence and particularly of life in NYC. Rocket Science is committed to fighting this battle on all fronts. This group show highlights a very personal journey of survival for every artist.

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Idris Habib is a NYC artist born in Ghana, and he calls himself a citizen of the world. While Habib's work focuses on black community, his international upbringing infuses his art with a deep sense of multiculturalism. He examines, in particular, the construction of identity and a tangled interrelationship between Africa and Western culture. Habib's thoughtful, made from observation portraits possess a deep sense of humanity and compassion.

Luke Silva's works reflect on a fragility of life and a very transient nature of our existence. Having witnessed a loss of a family home in a fire, and a subsequent mental illness and institutionalization of two close family members, Silva's works explore both destructive forces of life and subsequent regeneration. His fluid painterly approach allows us to look at themes of loss and loneliness in soft focus. Silva works predominantly in watercolor, dipping in and out of abstraction and figurative.

Maria Petrovskaya is a NYC artist born in Moscow, Russia (then Soviet Union), where she witnessed government oppression, economic devastation, wild Russian democracy and a subsequent slow return to authoritarianism. Abrasive life experiences and value of freedom influence Petrovskaya's paintings and sculptures. Life as an immigrant made her realize that while liberty is probably one of the most precious aspects of life, people in the West often take it for granted. Just like health, liberty is a unique resource that no one notices when they have it, but its absence turns life into a painful nightmare, and it's equally hard to win back once lost.

Courtney Mendenhall is a NYC based artist, whose meditative still life paintings slowly reveal complex psychological landscapes through their carefully arranged compositions of everyday objects.

Gallery hours: Wed – Sat, 11pm – 6pm, Sun, 12pm – 6pm or by appointment.