

# THEODORE:ART

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## Michelle Vaughan

### A Movement of Women



August 26 - October 22, 2020

Gallery hours Friday-Sunday 1-6 pm and by appointment

Theodore:Art is pleased to present *A Movement of Women*, an exhibition of a major historic research project created by Michelle Vaughan. This will be Vaughan's third solo show at the gallery.

Vaughan's installation includes 40 portraits in pastel of American conservative women, letterpress quotes, a data index box, a library, and archival materials collected by Vaughan over several years.

The opening date for this show is important. August 26, 1920 — the date of the passage of the 19th Amendment — arguably the high point of unity for America's women — came after some 70 years of work from the first women's convention, in Seneca Falls, focused on achieving universal suffrage. In the 100 years since that date, women have become increasingly divided. While progressive women were pushing for equality, conservative women spent much of their time defending American liberty and family values.

Vaughan's project investigates 40 of those conservative women, including activists, entertainers, politicians, television hosts, pundits and writers who have platforms to reach wide audiences. The list includes Laura Ingraham, Betsy DeVos, Anita Bryant, Nancy Reagan, and Phyllis Schlafly — all of whom also provide quotations for a series of twelve 8x10" letterpress prints, hand-pulled with Cheltenham metal type on pink heavy stock office paper.

The focus on conservative women helps Vaughan gain a clearer understanding of "progress" versus "tradition" when it comes to women's rights, health and equality. For instance, a woman's right to choose has been under attack since the passing of *Roe v. Wade*, leaving progressive women in a constant state of defense for the last 46 years, instead of building a stronger coalition for women's health as a whole. Recent headlines have featured conservative women defending the patriarchy in sexual discrimination lawsuits at companies like Fox News; DeVos's Department of Education rolling back sexual assault protection on college campuses; and the unfair pay gap women continue to face in the workforce.

Writes Vaughan: "As we remember those who paved a path for progress, I was instead interested in exploring stories of conservative women and their journey in shaping American values while reinforcing the patriarchal norm. Some have famous legacies; others are lesser-known women who made imprints in the law, influenced policy, or had prominent positions across faith-based communities. Collecting names of who to include became a complex, personal endeavor."

Michelle Vaughan received her BFA at UCLA. Her art practice focuses on political or historical subjects. She examines topics and then deconstructs and reinterprets the material through work in a variety of media — drawing, installation, letterpress printing, among others. Vaughan has had solo shows at Dumbo Art Center and the South Street Seaport, where she was awarded fiscal sponsorship from the New York Foundation of the Arts for Sea Warriors: A Public Art Project, in 2009. During the summer of 2018, her ongoing project "Generations," a deep dive into the degeneration by inbreeding of the Spanish Habsburgs, was shown in solo exhibitions at Galería Trinta and the Universidade Santiago de Compostela in Spain. Vaughan was born in Anaheim, California and lives in New York City.

For images and information, please contact Stephanie Theodore at [theodoreart@gmail.com](mailto:theodoreart@gmail.com).