

For Immediate Release

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Meredith Ward Fine Art

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PAT LASCH: THE LEGEND OF POPE JOAN

March 17 – April 28, 2023



Detail of *A Painting of a Garment for Pope Joan II*
2018-2022, acrylic, pearls, and glass beads, 43 1/2 x 52 in.

Meredith Ward Fine Art is pleased to present **Pat Lasch: The Legend of Pope Joan**, on view from March 17th through April 28th, 2023. The show will feature twelve of the artist's most recent works, including a series of sumptuous vestments created primarily with acrylic paint for the mythical Pope Joan. Also on view will be acrylic and eggshell panels that incorporate the language of crochet and a beaded hairwork installation. This is Lasch's fourth show at the gallery.

Lasch's *Pope Joan* series explores the medieval legend of a female pope. The scholarly and ambitious Pope Joan was able to disguise her biological identity until giving birth in the streets of Rome. Lasch's series is inspired by her Roman Catholic upbringing and 1980s residency in Rome after being awarded the prestigious Rome Prize. Through her deep engagement with materiality and the ornate pageantry of the Catholic Church, Lasch

has created elaborate papal vestments, slippers and a mitre for a future Pope Joan II, reviving the legend for a modern audience. Her current practice continues to draw on her substantial body of groundbreaking feminist work, which examines the social systems and rituals that underpin modern society.

Pat Lasch has been producing provocative work for almost four decades. Born in New York City in 1944, the daughter of a seamstress and pastry chef, Lasch was tutored by her father in the art of pastry decoration. She honors these skills in her masterful manipulation of acrylic paint. Lasch's elaborately decorated cakes and meticulously detailed fabric facsimiles transcend the ordinary to explore, as art

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historian Marshall Price notes, “a complex emotional terrain.” Art historian Grant Klarich Johnson writes, “Since the 1970s, Lasch’s unabashedly beautiful formal citations have evoked the props of familial ceremonies and the heirlooms carried from one generation to another... Unafraid of sentiment, Lasch’s practice embraces a sense of autobiography and private life as a universally stirring and politicized theme...” (*With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972–1985* (2019), The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, p. 292). The artist continues to engage with questions of tradition and ritual, aging and ancestry, and gender-based labor in her most recent work.



A Painting of a Garment for Pope Joan II, 2018-2022
Acrylic, pearls, and glass beads, 43 1/2 x 52 in.

An early member of the pioneering cooperative A.I.R. Gallery, Lasch has participated in many individual and group exhibitions in the United States and abroad. Her work is represented in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the National Academy

Museum, New York; the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C.; the Palm Springs Art Museum, California; and The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Lasch was given a major retrospective exhibition at The Palm Springs Art Museum, California, in 2017. Most recently, she was included in “With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972–1985” at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles in 2019, which traveled to the Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, in Spring 2021.

About the Gallery

Meredith Ward Fine Art opened in 2004 specializing in American art from the 19th century to the present. The gallery is the exclusive representative of the estates of Flora Crockett, Joseph Fiore, and Steve Wheeler. Meredith Ward Fine Art is located at 44 East 74th Street, Suite G, in New York City and is currently open Monday through Friday, 10am to 5pm. For more information or images, contact Meghan Schwab at 212-744-7306 or info@meredithwardfineart.com.

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Women's Work I, 2020-2022
Acrylic, egg shells, pearl, glass beads and spackle tape on canvas, 26 x 20 1/2 in.