



# Charley Friedman's Humorous Conceptual Art Featured in Two Long Island Shows

January 18, 2018

by Pat Rogers

In an unusual occurrence, a Long Island university gallery and a North Fork commercial one are offering a simultaneous look at the conceptual art practice of a Brooklyn artist through two distinct exhibitions and a slate of talks to enhance the experience of viewing both.

This weekend, the whimsical conceptual art of [Charley Friedman](#) is the subject of a solo show at [VSOP Projects](#) in Greenport Village on the North Fork and a two-person show with his wife, the artist [Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez](#), at [Stony Brook University's Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery](#) in Stony Brook, NY in eastern Suffolk County. Both shows have opening receptions on Saturday, January 20, 2018 in staggered times to make it possible for the interested to travel between the two.

"UNDERBELLY: An Exhibition of Works by Charley Friedman" opens with an Opening Reception on January 20, 2018 from 1 to 3 p.m. at VSOP Projects. The show remains on view through March 11, 2018.

"DOUBLE PORTRAIT: Charley Friedman and Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez" has an Opening Reception on January 20, 2018 at 7 p.m. at the Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery. An Artist Talk takes place on Monday, January 22, 2018 at 2:30 p.m. The show remains on view through February 17, 2018. Admission is free and is open to the public. The show is curated by Karen Levitov, the director and curator of the Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery.

Charley Friedman's work plays with material and technique to create conceptual art that's humorous, self-reflective, unexpected and performative. Adopting a playful stance, Friedman's art embraces a humorous exterior to explore identity, self and community in relation to society at large, according to Karen Levitov, Gallery Director of Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery at Stony Brook University.



"Everything Is Going To Be Okay" by Charley Friedman.  
Screenprint. Courtesy of VSOP Art + Design Projects.

Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez is a Colombian artist whose work explores the nature of identity and cultural membership through a feminist perspective. Like Friedman, she makes use of a variety of mediums including painting, sculpture, objects and mixed media. She describes her current art practice as creating a multi-narrative visual novel that explores cultural ownership and cultural memory through "...a synchronicity of dialogues, passages, punctuations, silences" that explore migration and the pursuit of the American dream, according to [her website](#).



Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez, "Travelers and Settlers," in front of Charley Friedman's "Garden," installation in progress at the Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery, Stony Brook University.

The couple lives in Brooklyn and Lincoln, Nebraska. Both have exhibited extensively internationally and nationally, received multiple grants, awarded many residencies and have work that's part of the permanent collections of noteworthy museums.

Charley Friedman's art is in collections held by [Walker Art Center](#), [Brooklyn Museum of Art](#), Stanford University and many others. Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez's work is part of permanent collections of [El Museo del Barrio](#), [El Museo de Arte Moderno](#) (Cali, Columbia); [el Museo de Arte Contemporaneo Bogota](#) (Columbia), [The Cleveland Museum](#) and others.

The Long Island exhibitions provide a unique insight into the artists work. Friedman's exhibition at VSOP Projects places an emphasis on the varied processes the artist favors in his practice. "UNDERBELLY: An Exhibition of Works by Charley Friedman" is the first solo show presented by the gallery, which opened last year.



"Dandelion" by Charley Friedman. Photograph. Courtesy of VSOP Art + Design Projects.

"Friedman's research-based practice draws from personal, geo-political, and psychological concerns, cleverly layering these themes upon or within one-another," stated VSOP Projects Director Jonathan Weiskopf in the exhibition announcement. "Works in the exhibition exemplify the laborious modes of production which Friedman often learns or employs in order to create a single work, subsequently abandoning once it has been mastered."

"UNDERBELLY" includes the installation *Carpet World*, 2003-2007, made up of a six-foot wide

scaled globe made from fabric that has been latched hooked and partnered with a proportionately-accurate moon made of the same materials. A single sculpture from Friedman's "Squirrel Gang" is also on view. By way of context, 75 bronze squirrels are part of the permanent installation of *Squirrel Gang* at Omi International Art Center in Ghent, NY in the Hudson Valley.



"Carpet World, Moon" by Charley Friedman. Hand-latched yarn, 6 feet diameter. Courtesy of VSOP Art + Design Projects.

Stony Brook University's exhibition takes advantage of its 5,000-square foot gallery to present towering installations that play to the location as well as encourage viewers to fully engage (and enjoy) the oversized installations and sculptures as singular pieces and in relation to Friedman-Sanchez's art.

The show includes Friedman's *Science Project*, a whirling 12-foot sculpture made up of around 80 motorized beach balls that conjures atoms in formation. *Garden*, is a wall installation made up of hollowed egg shells coated in resin and arranged in shapes that resemble flowers and plants. The work speaks directly to Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez's wall-installation *Self-Portrait in Papaya*, Levitov wrote in an email.



"Science Project" by Charley Friedman, Paul W. Zuccaire  
Gallery, Stony Brook University.

"I've been a fan of both Charley and Nancy's work for a long time, but only started thinking about showing their work together when I visited their amazing studio in Lincoln, Nebraska," Levitov wrote. "On first glance, their work seems very different—Charley's sculptures and installations are humorous, quirky and very much of the moment, whereas Nancy's paintings and sculptural pieces are intricately beautiful and draw on issues of gender, ethnicity and history. But the more I thought about their work, the more I saw really interesting visual and conceptual overlays."

"Visually, they both use repeated forms from nature, such as Charley's eggs that form a sprawling garden and Nancy's pearls woven into the shape of papayas," Levitov continued. "And conceptually, both artists are deeply interested in the relationship of self to society, identity and culture. Further, as a couple, their personal and artistic lives intersect on a daily basis, influencing the process of their art-making from idea to materialization. Each of these artists creates both grand gestures and intimate moments that fully engage the viewer."



Charley Friedman installing “Garden” at the Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery, Stony Brook University. Photo courtesy Stony Brook University.

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**BASIC FACTS: “UNDERBELLY: An Exhibition of Works by Charley Friedman”** is exhibited at VSOP Projects from January 20 to March 11, 2018. An Opening Reception will be held on January 20, 2018 from 1 to 3 p.m. VSOP Projects is located at 311 Front Street, Greenport, NY 11944.

**“DOUBLE PORTRAIT: Charley Friedman and Nancy Friedemann-Sánchez”** is on view from January 20 to February 17, 2018 at the Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery at Stony Brook University. An Opening Reception takes place on January 20, 2018 at 7 p.m. An Artist Talk takes place on Monday, January 22, 2018 at 2:30 p.m. Admission is free and is open to the public. The gallery is located inside the Staller Center for the Arts at Stony Brook University, 100 Nicolls Road, Stony Brook, NY 11794.

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