

LAUREL GITLEN

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PAMELA SNEED *ABOUT time*

JUNE 9 – JULY 16, 2022
OPENING RECEPTION JUNE 9, 5–7 PM
READING 7 PM

ABOUT Time presents twenty-four works on paper by poet, activist, visual artist, and educator Pamela Sneed, an artist I've long admired. The watercolors, mostly portraits of people she holds in great esteem, are often coupled with descriptive phrases, narrative excerpts, or poems. Pamela's gestural brushstroke has the immediacy of a diary entry, with emotive explosions of color and a teary liquidity, rendering her subjects through feeling as much as detail. The line of her drawing extends into the hand of her writing, connecting a space of vision with a space of declaration. Public and historical Black figures appear alongside family members blurring distinctions between collective Black experiences and personal ones.

This selection belongs to a larger series of paintings she has been making as a daily practice since the onset of the pandemic. Each piece marks another day, while the twenty-four works on view might collectively suggest a day's hours. Overlapping time signatures weave through her paintings. The slow pace of quarantine is measured against the too-soon deaths of friends and family members. The George Floyd uprising was a long time coming and the violence perpetrated against Black bodies continues time and time again.

Each of the paintings is an act of dedication, commemorating the lives lost and those cruelly taken. Her work carves out space for love and grief outside of time, while also demanding our action and accountability in the now. Two collages, one with her father and another with herself as a child (*The Fighter 2*, 2022 and *The Poet 2*, 2022) identify the strength and lyricism at play in her work. In *Crown for George Floyd*, 2022, Pamela enshrines George Floyd with the radiant power of the lines of her poem, *8 Minutes 46 Seconds*.

(Justine Kurland, May 2022)

8 Minutes 46 Seconds

That they would sit on a mans neck
Til his body breathe spirit gave out
That they rendered him inaudible voiceless
That 8 minutes passed
8 minutes 46 seconds
It took days and citizens uprisings for the police officers involved to
be arrested
That the news showed that one officer casually sitting on the Black
mans neck
As if the man below were a deer/mountain grizzly/ a bounty/trophy
subdued
Until there was no wrestling no life left
That the great AIDS activist Larry Kramer would die days later
That we all owe him something of our lives
That his memorial went on
That the chat closed before I could say again
Thank you Larry Kramer
Keep fighting
Before I could type George Floyd's name in the chat box
Say the two were connected
in the struggle for human rights.

(Pamela Sneed, 2020)

Pamela Sneed (b. Boston, MA) is a New York based artist, poet, performer, and teacher as well as a longstanding leader in the activist community. Her memoir in poetry and prose *Funeral Diva*, documents her experiences during the AIDS crisis both as a caregiver and a queer black woman, and was awarded the 2021 Lambda Literary Award for poetry. She has published numerous books of poetry, and her work has been widely published in journals including *Artforum*, *Frieze*, and *The Paris Review*. Sneed has performed her work internationally at institutions including MoMA, the Whitney Museum, The Studio Museum in Harlem, the ICA London, the Brooklyn Museum, the New Museum, Joe's Pub and the Toronto Biennale. As a visual artist, her work has been included in exhibitions at the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art, New York and Ortega y Gasset Projects and Motherbox, Brooklyn. Recently Sneed was an organizer of *The Last Address Tribute Walk* with Visual Aids and the Studio Museum in Harlem and is the narrator of Coco Fusco's much lauded film *Your Eyes Will be an Empty World* in the 2022 Whitney Biennial, *Quiet as it's Kept*. Sneed will be a 2022 Artist in Residence with BOFFO on Fire Island this summer.

Please contact the gallery, office@laurelgitlen.com for further information or images.

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Wenesday - Saturday, 12-6 PM
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*The entrance to the gallery is on East Broadway at the rear door of the Apple Bank Building. There is an elevator in the building. Please contact the gallery for access to the ramp.