

APRIL AND PARIS

A unique collaboration takes world-renowned creatives on a journey from O.C. to the City of Light.

By Lauren Lloyd



F. SCOTT FITZGERALD once said: "The best of America drifts to Paris." This month, two of O.C.'s most talented artists will begin to make their way to the City of Light by way of *The Paris Seminar: An Exhibition and Workshop Series of American Realist Painters*, which runs April 1 to 14 at Laguna College of Art + Design (lcad.edu). The program—organized by artist, curator and LCAD student Vanessa Rothe, with partner and fellow creative Sean Forester, co-owner of Golden Gate Atelier school of classical art and design—showcases works by 14 world-renowned realist artists and includes lectures and panel presentations. Rothe (who is also an art dealer and the West Coast editor of *Fine Art Connoisseur* magazine), and LCAD fine arts chair Hope Railey are among the featured talents, including Jeremy Lipking, Adrian Göttlieb, Iliya Mirochnik, Kate Sammons and Aaron Westerberg.

After the show closes in O.C., it will travel to New York for a showing at Salmagundi Art Club. Then the elite group will journey to Paris in August for a 10-day study-abroad experience. During both exhibitions, all pieces—figures, landscapes and still works priced between \$1,000 and \$12,000—will be for sale, and the proceeds will be used to help fund the trip. "In order for today's realists to take their work to the next level, they need the inspiration of composition, humanities and copying great art in museums," says Rothe. While abroad, the painters will be charged with creating large-scale multigure compositions. Railey views the project as "an important gathering of academics from across the country, which opens the door to important dialogue about how we practice and where our craft can improve, both in the studio and in our teachings."

Patrons are invited to LCAD's main campus April 8, from 4 to 6:30PM, for a live tandem figure-painting demonstration by Göttlieb and Sammons, followed by a lecture with Rothe and Forester and a wine and hors d'oeuvres reception. Participating artists will attend, and works will be available for purchase. Additionally, lectures and a panel discussion on realism and group composition are slated for April 9, from 9:30AM to 12:30PM, by LCAD professors and participating artists like Westerberg and Railey.

"The only way for traditional realism to come alive," says Forester, "is for young painters to make meaningful images for our time. *The Paris Seminar* aims to give them the tools and the inspiration to do just that." *C'est magnifique.*

FINE ART Aaron Westerberg's "Black Kimono" oil-on-canvas painting is featured in *The Paris Seminar*.