

Concurrently

Anthony Lepore  
**Bikini Factory**

at **François Ghebaly Gallery**



**Anthony Lepore**

**Splash,  
Glow,  
Fullflex,**

at The  
Bikini Factory

**Public Fiction**

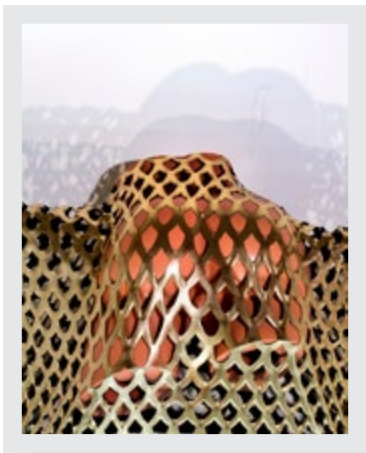
# Splash, Glow, Fullflex,

At The  
Bikini Factory

By **Anthony  
Lepore**

with Public Fiction  
Curated by Lauren Mackler

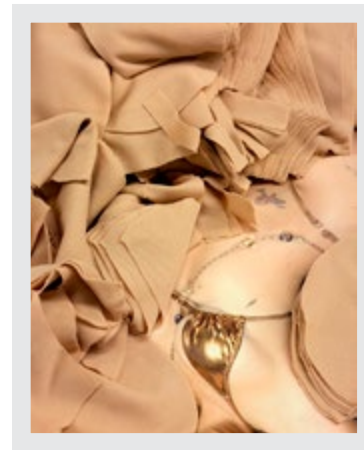
April 24 – June 6th,



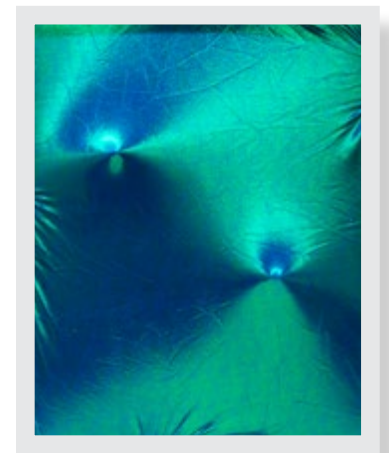
*Gold Standard, 2015*



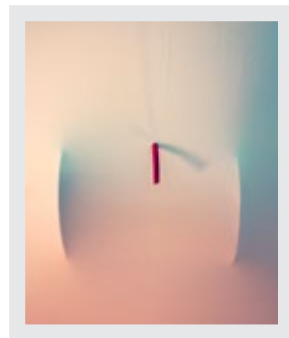
*Punch, 2015*



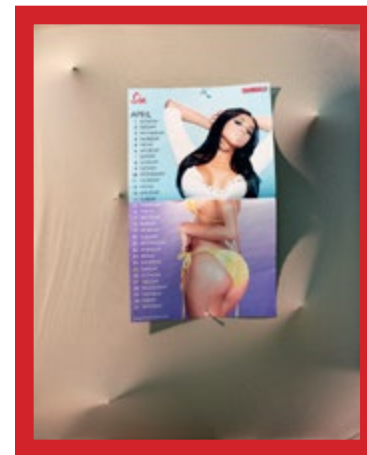
*Gold Cup, 2015*



*Pusher, 2014*



*Spaghetti Strap, 2015*



*Pin-Up, 2014*



*Squish, 2014*

**The Bikini Factory**  
3305 Pasadena Avenue, LA, CA. 90031

# Splash, Glow, Fullflex,

Dear reader,  
Thank you for joining us for this night-viewing of eight works by Anthony Lepore *in situ* of their making. This exhibition runs concurrent with "Bikini Factory", a larger show of the artists' work, being held at François Ghebaly Gallery downtown.

The gallery exhibition proper, presents three lines of thinking, one of which is autobiographical (not only was Lepore basically raised in the depicted factory, but his role as a young terror, running through the sewing machine aisles, is still visible in the misbehaving pictures.) The second is biographical, depicting with a poetical-documentary eye some of the residuals (chairs, table, talismans) of the women who work, have worked, at the factory every day, for decades and sometimes generations. The third is abstract, fabric is pushed, pulled, violated, stretched over unidentifiable body parts. In the white cube, these three approaches come to-

gether to make a whole thought, a complete experience of the factory, displaced and restaged in the gallery for exhibition purposes. These three kinds of work are mixed up to make a slippery whole: objects, pictures, bodies, fabrics, infrastructure, architecture.... Splash.

But back to our event at hand; further North, in Lincoln Heights, seven photographs have been hanging, or let's say hovering, over the factory's backdrop since April 24th. Seven images pulled from their settings, tensile-ing their likeness to their surroundings. Sitting, cool, through the daily bustle of the factory. Watching and being watched. For a knowing eye, the materials and objects that construct the semi-abstract pictures are familiar, and layered; the familiar made strange.

And speaking of the uncanny, this one comes in many flavors: *Snakebite, Madera, Rockstar, Wht/pink, Nude lace*, list the rows of fabric. The labels we have for things don't really work here. I mean, really, what exactly is on display at the factory? Is it the framed works strategically placed throughout the space, driving you forward, left, right,

straight and up? When I invited you here, did you come to see the images or the place? Does that matter? Do you care? Are they the same? Did it change? Is the factory an elaborate frame for the images Lepore produced or are the works a gateway to enter this private, loaded, productive and generational space?

One of the more conceptual flavors of uncanny is the equation made between the labor of bikini crafting and the labor of art production. One of the benefits these twin-shows provide is distinguishing the site of making from the site of showing, and then complicating their roles, a bit. The factory is a kind of backstage, providing transparency to the process. Did you want to see everything? The sweat and the unspooled? Bra cups and spaghetti straps? Here it is: layers of history, family histories, of innumerable families, paintings by your grandmother, pictures of the women-laborers, pin-ups on calendars, noticias, clippings, fabrics, boxes, chotchkie....

Dear V,

*What I have been trying to say is that this is about context, site and*

*context: Whereas I usually stage for you exhibitions in which I invent a topic, a frame that jointly contextualizes disparate works, this one is different. The site itself is unforgivably loaded and married to the images that were produced, that are presented. Imagine this show at night alone, each piece a safe distance from the others, lit unevenly by available light, a security strip maybe, one that never goes off, permitting an eventual interloper to find their way out in the case of a fire. The whole place is sleepy, save for the works, gyrating. My idea here is not to build narrative (as you might be doing at François') but rather to punctuate the preexisting narrative, (narratives!) of the factory. To imagine or inseminate the idea of people fucking in corners, of tits and asses fitting into these crude cut out shapes, of dismembered body parts being held together by teased latex.*

*This exhibition is a hall of mirrors, an infinite regress, a series of fertile Russian dolls producing bodies out of shells.*

*It is the first in Public Fiction's new offsite and nomadic exhibitions. This one is situated within the romantics of voltage furniture, but also within a corporation, a business, a site of production. Old clunky machines and racks act as a hilarious counterpart to the prevalent cor-*



*porate fetish in contemporary art; the dripping models dismembered by ripped and re-taped calendars, smiling because they know that the #confidencecode is a brand they invented.*

Now, let's talk about showing. Showing art, showing skin, showing your parts, showing your bump, showing your process. Showing a transformation; bodies flexing, being molded, aging, sweating, aliform and androgynous. Raunchy, rough and destabilizing. Let's show both the discomfort and the pleasure of being in one's own skin. Let's show the ones "about skin": lycra skin, plastic skin, real skin.

Because what is the body if not sloppy, sexy, funny, and so precarious, so temporary: a classic case of the thing that defines, will defy you. What self-respecting feminist can talk about the body without talking about its unraveling, its treason? A treason to who exactly, you might say. This image of desire is not yours, you are un-seduced. So much so that it's easy for you to recreate sexiness as a kind of monstrous grotesque game of the imagination. Spools protrude twice through fabric like breasts,

like weapons, sharp and raging. These monsters you have made from surrogate-parts are a kind of reverse birthing. You turn a body that can manufacture other bodies from gooey mass, into a solid flat image, barely containable in a frame. Are these forms even gendered?

One of the hypothetical characters is a disjointed body, upper half severed, legs only extending down to its thighs, and held together like many others by gravity-defying fabrics, and materials made to repel wetness.

The final flavor of uncanny? "Supernatural Alienesque-Real," or the inconceivably real. Nothing here is manipulated, photo-shopped or privy to post-production airbrushing. The images depict a comedy of props, gravity, time, like-ness and performance, for your camera's eye.

Now, suppose we gave this body a name...Like A or Z or Hilda, which is scribbled on a box beside her. And we re-read the images with a penchant towards Science Fiction. Iridescent colors, glowing fabrics, shapes that imply bodies, bodies without orifices, flat surfaces protruding violently like ghosts reaching through walls.

The bikini factory cannot help but remind you of the supernatural relationships we have to our bodies, the way we twist and turn them, see them as they are or as they never will be or as they never were. "Alienesque", burlesque, cuntesque, delusionesque, fullflex....an alphabet soup of uncanny spaghetti.

And so. We are here, alongside the images, waiting, watching a video called the *Raunchy Mariachi* and listening to the eighth piece on display: a sound work called *Las Muchachas*, named after the women who work in the factory and on view (in your ears) for one night only. *Las Muchachas* is a recording of their voices, singing along with (and over) the radio station they play, while working. The impromptu choir of voices rising, daily, through the open warehouse, singing through speakers protruding from a factory sewing machine-cum-sculpture, her mechanical, industrial body.

— Lauren Mackler

