

# Stronger than Dirt

## Gina Phillips

21 April – 31 May 2014

Opening Reception  
Saturday, 3 May 6-9pm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
(New Orleans, Louisiana) April, 2013



Jonathan Ferrara Gallery is proud to announce *Stronger than Dirt*, new paintings and mixed media work by artist **Gina Phillips**. The exhibition will be on view from 21 April through 31 May, 2014 with an opening reception on **Saturday, 3 May** from **6-9pm**.

For her latest solo exhibition at the gallery, Phillips returns to painting, her first medium. She started her career as a painter and over the years has increasingly incorporated fabric and thread into her work. Now circling back to painting, the most common narrative characteristic that runs through her entire body of work is tragicomedy. The people, animals and memories that tell the story often embody a magical realism.

Phillips says of *Stronger than Dirt*,:

*The combativeness of cleanliness forms the seed of inspiration for a new body of work by Gina Phillips. The title of the show, Stronger Than Dirt, comes from the original slogan for Ajax cleaning powder. A laundry sprinkler named Little Yellow Miss and her partner in grime, The Old Dutch Girl cleanser character, are the two main characters struggling against the savage forces at work around them. On hand is an arsenal of colorful, sculpted laundry sticks to help them chase out the dirt. Santa, sad bears, sinuous corn stalks, oversized birthday cakes and industrious ants round out a dichotomous narrative revolving around civilized and savage forces at work. In a departure from the mixed-media fabric work she has become known for, Phillips' new work includes paintings on paper and panel, and sculpted wood forms and installation elements that include found objects and heaps of bricks and rubble.*

**Gina Phillips** is a mixed-media, narrative artist who grew up in Kentucky and has lived in New Orleans since 1995. Her work is influenced by the imagery, stories and characters of both regions. Phillips has a BFA from University of Kentucky and an MFA from Tulane University's Newcomb College. Her work has been exhibited in galleries and museums across the country including at Pepperdine University, Tulane University, Ballroom Marfa and the Asheville Art Museum. In addition, her work has been featured at the PULSE Art Fair in Miami and Los Angeles, Texas Contemporary, Houston and VOLTA8 Art Fair, Basel, Switzerland. Phillips' work has been featured in Art in America, The Times-Picayune and ARTNews, among others. She was selected as one of twenty-seven international artists featured in Prospect.2 Biennial of Contemporary Art curated by Dan Cameron. Her work was most recently featured at the Ogden Museum for a mid-career retrospective entitled, *I Was Trying Hard to Think About Sweet Things*.

Her work is in numerous collections including University of Kentucky, Lexington; NASA; New Orleans Museum of Art; Ogden Museum of Southern Art; 21c Museum, KY; the Drake Hotel, Toronto; The Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation; Tulane University and House of Blues (various locations across US.); and the collections of Marilyn Oshman, Thomas Coleman and Josh Rechnitz.

Gina Phillips lives and works in the Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans, LA.