

Kembra Pfahler  
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS  
Unit 4 Huntingdon Estate  
London E1 6JU  
Nov. 16 – Dec. 21, 2016

Emalin is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new and historic works by the American performance artist, filmmaker, and musician Kembra Pfahler. For her first exhibition at Emalin, the artist follows the philosophy of availabism - making the best of what's available - to bring together a range of objects in an installation that replicates her iconic apartment in New York City. The 'tile-red' space includes works by Bruce LaBruce, Katrina Del Mar, Mike Diana, Laure Leber, Relic Stones from Future Feminism, Richard Kern, Samoa, Scott Ewalt, and Shove Mink AKA Croshame.

Kembra will be staging a performance with The Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black during the private view on Tuesday, November 15th, 6-9pm. An evening of rare film screenings selected by the artist will take place at the gallery on Thursday, November 17th, 9:30 - 11:30pm.

Kembra Pfahler was born in Hermosa Beach, California in 1961, and she lives and works in New York City. Major solo exhibitions include Fuck Island, Participant Inc. (New York, NY, USA, 2012); File Under 'V', Rove Gallery (London, UK, 2005); Availabism and Anti-naturalism: A Feminine Experiment, American Fine Arts Company (New York, NY, USA, 2002); and Riddle of the Sphinx, Deitch Projects (New York, NY, USA 2002). Selected group exhibitions include Future Feminism, The Hole (New York, NY, USA, 2014); New York Minute, Garage Center for Contemporary Art (Moscow, RU, 2011) traveling to MACRO Museum (Rome, IT, 2011); Dead Flowers, Vox Populi (Philadelphia, PA, USA, 2010); and Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art (New York, NY, USA, 2008).

Opening hours: Wednesday – Saturday, 11am – 6pm or by appointment.  
For sales enquiries please contact the gallery at [info@emalin.co.uk](mailto:info@emalin.co.uk).

I wanted to share with London a show called capital improvements. It means that when you've got a living situation that's managed by a landlord, they improve your life by giving you shiny new appliances, they cover your old walls with new white perfect surfaces. They redesign your living space to homogenize it and then are able to raise your rent from 600 dollars to up to 5 thousand dollars. This was the situation in my building as it was repurchased by a new landlord a few years ago, he's not uncool, he just is a businessman who wants for some reason to make money in a neighborhood that was largely salvaged by artists since the 60s. We fought for heat, for water, for safe conditions. Yes we were gentrifiers as well when we arrived in the late 70s but we still were part of the semi middle class. The semi lower middle class that no longer is able to exist in New York City any longer. The rents rose but it was still manageable for young artists well into the 80s. This is a long complex history but what happened to me was I refused capital improvement in my home when offered. I love the wabi-sabi... the beautiful decay and imperfection of my home. The design elements in the house have been lauded by many and I wanted to share parts of this space with you here at Emalin gallery, the tile red and the objects that are here represent 30 years of struggle and dreaming up a vocabulary of images that later became known as „the manual of action“ more specifically the availabist manual of action. Availabism is a term I developed which makes the best use of what is available.

I always loved the last scene in „Planet of the Apes“ where Charlton Heston realizes the world as he knew it no longer exists. That he thought he'd been lost, on another planet, but didn't actually realize he'd been home all along. More and more the city...All of our cities are losing their identities by way of financial racism and globalization and by changing the look of something, by way of chicly redecorating it changes, its value. I told my landlord I loved the way my apartment looked and didn't need a capital improvement. In fact, my idea of a capital improvement would be to spray paint the Statue of Liberty black and have it hold a pentagram. A symbol to me that's not indicative of a sky god religion. You know the sci-fi religions that have always been cringe-worthy to me with their misogynist undertones. But I'm saying a lot clearly... and believe me I'm aware that I'm not saying it perfectly and we all know the awkward failures of artists who try to speak on politics with a desire to change the world, it's a kind of optimism I realize. That doesn't suit many... but I imagined that if I could change the environment I lived in and express myself through interdisciplinary art and live in an immersive anti-naturalist severe dwelling that was transformed by me from the floor up. Tore up from the floor up. It could somehow have a contagious effect on those that experienced it... this work actually. My studio is the brain and the work born of it, the body. I fought for years to remain here and they still of course want me out. They want us all out. I'm not exaggerating this my English friends as I know it's happening to you all as well. This show shares with you the space where I created the tools to express my views, thoughts and feelings, there were movements born in this place. „Extremism“ „beautilism“ „anti-naturalism“ „availabism“... I have been able to live a contrarian type of existence here... an alternative type of life style... one that seems to be viewed as a rarity these days, which is why I think so many people come in and want to photograph my apartment all the time now. It's a place I have fought so hard to keep, and instead of crying at the sight of a damaged ruined blown to shreds statue of Liberty like Charlton Heston and instead of crying and saying „what have we done,“ I want to get doodled up and stand next to it. I know I have to take responsibility for being a part of it... but I want to say „what can we do“ of course and spray it black. Can we change the ending of this horror film we are in? Does this have anything at all to do? with my art exhibit at Emalin? I'll let Emalin explain this to you all as well. But I'll keep writing everyday these things for you all until I get there and have the show at Emalin gallery on November 15.