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**(Denver CO)** RULE Gallery is pleased to present *Pretty Powerful*, a group exhibition featuring work by Abigail Lucien, Amber Cobb, Anne Noggle, Jenny Sharaf, Margaret Neumann and Sarah Bowling at its Denver, Colorado location. The exhibition is co-curated by Hilary Morris (RULE Gallery) and Cydney Wilkes (Leisure Studios). The show will open with a public reception on June 23, 2017, from 6-9pm, and will be on view from June 23 through July 29, 2017.

By interrupting historical and current mainstream visual language, *Pretty Powerful* explores and deconstructs several layers of female representation. An element of play informs each work, and the exhibition as a whole, highlighting the roles and rules in place controlling depictions of women as objects for the male gaze. Just as the title of the show invites several intonations with different meanings, *Pretty Powerful* focuses on the artist's potential to manipulate and transform the familiar in order to rebalance systems of power which determine what is shown and can be seen. These images present the viewer with what it looks like for a woman to consider herself through the contradictory lenses of the public arena and private domain. The ability to re-cast social and sexual roles through alterations in the visual field is identified as a shared source of power within these varied artistic disciplines and experiences.

The work presented by these artists is remarkable by its breadth: from Anne Noggle's provocatively titled portraiture series 'Saga of Fallen Flesh' to Margaret Neumann's depiction of the nourishment-giving 'Tit'. *Pretty Powerful* uncovers experiences of the feminine and untold stories about, but not restricted to, being a woman.

Haitian-American artist **Abigail Lucien** spent her youth in Cap-Haïtien, Haiti before moving with her mother and two elder sisters to Palm Coast, Florida. Lucien's sculptures, sound, and videos narrate over shared environments in which our desire to escape is integral to the body of what we try to leave behind. Performance becomes both the subject and content within the work as she invites viewers to directly participate. The work examines how our personal performances and experiences of race, gender, sexuality, and nationality are framed within our culture, while investigating where and when the truth in these performed themes of identity warp.

**Amber Cobb** is a Colorado based artist, living and working in the Denver area. In 2011 she received her M.F.A. in Sculpture from the University of Colorado at Boulder. Cobb has a diverse body of work that explores the duality of attraction and the abject, and the pieces in *Pretty Powerful* extend her exploration to the primal and sensual nature of sexuality and intimacy. Using materials that relate to skin: remnants of bedding, sheets, pillows, and stuffed animals, Cobb captures intimate movements and coats them in black silicone. Frozen in the moment, the disheveled bedding looks both wet yet firm and the resultant contradictions highlight her underlying themes.

After serving as a military pilot and photographer in World War II and the Korean War, **Anne Noggle** received her Masters of Fine Arts from the University of New Mexico in 1969. It was there that Noggle developed a keen photographic eye and an interest in the ageing body. Noggle's late entrance into the artistic realm is not representative of her cultural and political



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acumen: anachronistically speaking, Noggle's saga references the influx of Selfie culture by using wit and other theatrical elements to frame different versions of her 'self'.

Currently living and working in San Francisco, **Jenny Sharaf** is a multi-disciplinary artist whose paintings, installations, videos, and happenings celebrate process, while reflecting on art history, feminism and abstraction. An interest in cultural and commercial consumption informs Sharaf's use of material; her work in paint is often overlaid with images taken from magazines or incorporated into the digital world. Sharaf's use of velvet, paint and collage is evocative of the physicality of erotica and the visual display of the red-light district, in contrast to the relatively invisible yet omnipresent trace of digital pornography.

**Margaret Neumann's** work explores the emotional landscape of thoughts and feelings that form our sense of self. Neumann received a Master's of Fine Arts at the University of Colorado in Boulder in 1969. Before that she attended Colorado College and spent a summer in the Art Department at Columbia University. Her work for *Pretty Powerful* is maternal in theme: her painting locates the breast as a site of desperation and want for nourishment, pleasure and sexual development.

**Sarah Bowling** lives and works in her native home of Denver, Colorado. Bowling received her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2016. Her work has been exhibited in solo and group shows across the country, including Aggregate Space, Sullivan Gallery, and Archer Beach Haus, among others. Bowling's work explores the fragmentariness of the self and exploits the dislocated parts of the human body to suggest a playfulness at work between the push/pull dynamic of contradictory themes.

**RULE Gallery** has exhibited contemporary abstract and conceptual works, including paintings, sculpture, photography, and works on paper, by both established and emerging national artists since 1991. The gallery has locations in Denver, Colorado, and Marfa, Texas. For more information, visit [www.rulegallery.com](http://www.rulegallery.com)