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Robert Fishko, *Director*

For Immediate Release

**CLIO NEWTON**  
***Venus***

September 26 – November 9, 2019



*René*, 2019, compressed charcoal on paper, 91 x 58 inches

**New York, NY** – Clio Newton, the 30-year-old American artist whose monumental figurative charcoal drawings have drawn the attention of museums and collectors in group shows at Forum Gallery and in the gallery’s art fair presentations, will have her first major one-person exhibition in America at Forum Gallery, New York, from September 26 to November 9, 2019. The nine drawings in the exhibition depict “gender composites” invented by Newton, who composes her subjects from male bodies and female heads, as did Botticelli, Delacroix, Michelangelo, Titian and many artists of the Renaissance. While these masters used male bodies in response to the prudence and female subjugation of the time, Newton creates fully contemporary portraits whose simultaneous maleness and femaleness are provocative and compelling in their reference to the gender fluidity of this era.

Writing in the exhibition catalogue, Eleanor Heartney observes, “The moment of transition is imperceptible – in some works it appears to happen around the shoulders or neck, in others we only become aware of the shift in genders in the arms and legs. Sometimes it is masked by masses of falling hair. Or it only becomes evident in the thickening of shoulders or the unexpected hairiness of chest or legs...these beautiful young people remain unaccountably disconcerting.”

Each of Newton’s subjects, then, is a true composite of very real people. All are individual models, friends and relatives, exquisitely rendered with compressed charcoal to create interwoven lines and dark ebony masses that describe luminous skin, shining eyes and luxurious tresses. And each subject is fully self-aware, making each drawing uncannily convincing. While the drawings present no political agenda, the subjects are powerful, self-possessed, proud and unapologetic. Ultimately, they are attached to the realm of myth, fantasy and archetype, while they are at once real and not real. In summary, Heartney states, “they remind us that art is the realm of the imagination, never more so than when it serves up a convincing illusion of reality.”



Clio Newton in her studio

*Clio Newton: Venus*, is on view from September 26 to November 9, 2019. Clio Newton received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at The Cooper Union in New York City and a Master of Fine Arts at Zürcher Hochschule der Künste in Zürich, Switzerland. She was awarded the AKKU Artist in Residency grant in Zurich, and was selected as one of the top young artists in Europe by *Artagon* in Paris.

Clio Newton is a two-time recipient of the Elizabeth Greenshields Grant Award and has exhibited her work in California, Miami, New England and New York as well as in Florence, Italy; Munich, Paris and Zürich. During the last year, her work has been added to the collections of The Flint Institute, MI; 21C Museum, Louisville, KY; and the Baltimore Museum of Art, MD.

Clio Newton is represented by Forum Gallery.

***Clio Newton: Venus*** opens with a reception for the artist on Thursday, September 26, 2019 from 5:30pm to 7:30pm, and will be on view through Saturday, November 9, 2019.

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**Forum Gallery is located at 475 Park Avenue at 57<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10022. Please visit [forumgallery.com/exhibitions/clio-newton-venus](http://forumgallery.com/exhibitions/clio-newton-venus) to view the entire exhibition online. The exhibition begins on September 26, 2019 and will be on view through November 9, 2019. Forum Gallery is open Monday through Saturday, 10am to 5:30pm. A full-color catalogue is available from the gallery.**

**For more information, please contact Kevin Dao, 212-355-4545; [kevin@forumgallery.com](mailto:kevin@forumgallery.com)**