

GAVLAK

Lara Salmon, "Zoe Buckman packs a punch in "Let Her Rave" at Gavlak", Art and Cake LA, March 26, 2018

ART AND CAKE

Zoë Buckman packs a punch in "Let Her Rave" at Gavlak



Zoë Buckman, Let Her Rave, Gavlak Gallery; Photo courtesy of the gallery

Zoë Buckman packs a punch in "Let Her Rave"

through April 7

Gavlak Gallery, Los Angeles

By Lara Salmon

Zoë Buckman's show "Let Her Rave" opened at Gavlak on March 3 to an excited crowd of Angelino feminists. The show is characteristic of Buckman's familiar tropes: emboldened female empowerment, a battle cry against the patriarchy and celebration of femme aesthetics.

Hanging from the ceiling of the gallery are clusters of white boxing gloves, stitched over with fragments of wedding dresses. These sculptures combine two gendered archetypes, recalling the woman on her wedding day and a male-dominated sport based on punching. Buckman uses approximately thirty vintage wedding dresses to create the work in the show, some from second hand shops and some donated. The work is imbued with the history of these women on their special day. It alludes to the system of patriarchy that

GAVLAK

marriage has come to represent, and that feminism has raged against. Buckman pins pieces of the dresses to the boxing gloves and sends them to a wedding dress seamstress to be professionally stitched on. She then assembles the sculptures with the finished gloves back in her studio. In addition to the hanging works there are a collection of “quilts” along the wall, also made out of used wedding dresses. These pieces function between paintings and traditional female fabric work. Wedding dresses are rarely worn after their momentous day; perhaps Buckman’s show is a reuse or recycling of material and memory.

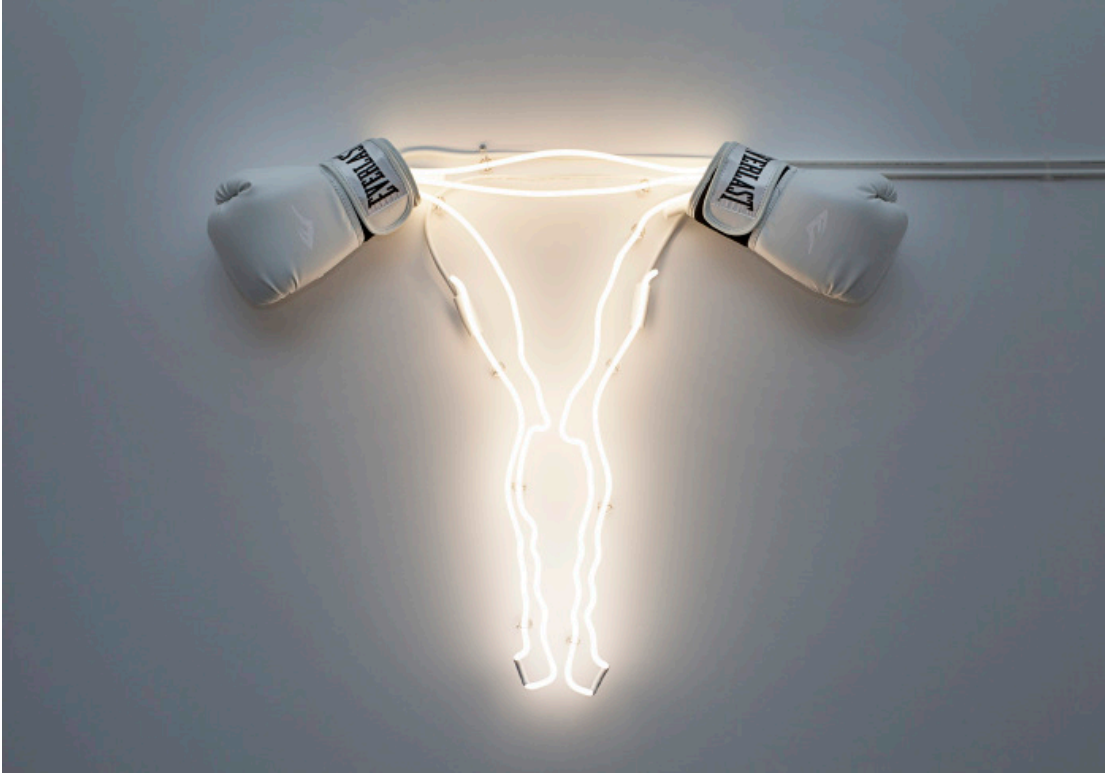


Zoë Buckman, *Let Her Rave*, Gavlak Gallery; Photo courtesy of the gallery

The only non-white item in the gallery is a neon sign (which isn’t actually neon—it burns a light red hue) in the corner. It curves out from the wall to display the message and title of the show: “LET HER RAVE.” With this declaration Buckman gives women permission to break from the compliant expectations of their gender. Being a woman should mean embracing all sides of femininity, to be delicate and beautiful and yet wild and passionate. A woman’s release of emotion is too often viewed as overly-dramatic, while as a society we condone such masculine displays in arenas such as the boxing ring.

Buckman’s show coincides with the release of her first ever public sculpture “Champ” at The Standard hotel on Sunset Boulevard. This 43 foot tall neon sign is the outline of a uterus with boxing gloves for ovaries. It will be a Hollywood fixture for the next year. Though Buckman has been working on it for a while, timing serendipitously coincides with the #MeToo movement. Women in the movie-making business are punching back as they tell stories of the sexual harassment and rape they have experienced from the men in their industry. The sculpture stands as a sign of unity and determination to reveal Los Angeles’s underworld of cruel male power.

GAVLAK



Zoë Buckman. "Champ." The Standard hotel. Photo Courtesy Gavlak

Female identifying artists have come a long way in the last decades to gain a microphone for their concerns about inequalities they face as being women. This work will probably never end. Feminists and cultural creators have the responsibility to recognize their own positions within the movement based on personal identity and opportunities. Buckman's show at Gavlak presents an idea of liberation for the relatively privileged woman, which appears to be her audience. In writing and interviews she states her belief for the importance of an intersectional feminist movement. A challenge in the future for Buckman may be to have the work reflect this call for inclusivity while remaining inspired from her personal background and true to her own voice.

Zoë Buckman's solo show "Let Her Rave" is on view at Gavlak through April

7: <http://www.gavlakgallery.com/>