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CONTACT: NATI HYOJIN KIM >>> TEL: 212 331 8888 >>> FAX: 212 343 2134 >>> NATI@MIXEDGREENS.COM

## HOWARD FONDA
## *Everything and Nothing*

March 20, 2014 – April 19, 2014
Opening: Thursday, March 20, 6-8pm

Mixed Greens is thrilled to announce Howard Fonda's sixth solo exhibition with the gallery. In *Everything and Nothing*, he will exhibit a new series of largely autobiographical oil paintings and drawings. For Fonda, painting is a spiritual outpost, with the finished works existing as byproducts of instinct, thought, contemplation, and struggle.

Miguel: "So what's this all about?"
Howard: "What? The painting? Oh, it's everything and nothing."
Miguel: "Oh. Right. Of course."
Howard: "Primum viveri deinde philosophare."*
Miguel: "Word."

Sometimes purely formal, other times historical, philosophical, or metaphysical, Fonda's paintings freely alternate between abstraction and figuration. Yet, Fonda is less interested in distinguishing styles than in the quest for sincerity and truth in mark making. In each body of work, he is attempting to understand the world around him through the discovery within his serious painting practice. He is interested in the formal architecture of a painting–color, line, viscosity of the paint, and composition–as well as a purposeful narrative. The narrative is often demanding, however, forcing the viewer to find content in form, and sense the thoughtfulness, awkward beauty, and wonder present in a space where intuition and painstaking intention meet.

When asked, Fonda reveals that his time in the studio is a never-ending effort to make a good painting without being gratuitous, self-absorbed, trendy, market-driven, or lucky. It is a lifetime's goal to which Fonda is wholly dedicated. His marks are self-aware, direct, and playful, often including hidden text, poetic moments with his family, successes, and failures. His diverse influences currently include Sophie von Hellerman, Mari Eastman, Merlin James, Matisse, Henry Miller, Thelonious Monk, Emerson, Native American art and culture, African American social history, his wife, and his son. These canvases reveal a series of figures dissolving into and emerging from color – the slippage between art and life.

*Howard Fonda received his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His first solo show, "…with love," was at Mixed Greens, New York City. Since then, he has shown widely with solo shows at ebersmoore, Chicago, IL; Light & Sie Gallery, Dallas, TX; Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL; Harwood Art Center in Albuquerque, NM; and Duchess, Chicago, IL. In 2009, his solo exhibition at Chicago's Roots and Culture received a review in ArtForum. Other exhibition venues include The South Bend Art Museum, South Bend, IN; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL; Raid Projects, Los Angeles, CA; Bodybuilder and Sportsman, Chicago, IL; and Barbara Davis Gallery, Houston, TX. He was also a founding member and co-director of The Pond, a curatorial triumvirate that organized exhibitions in a storefront in Chicago's Westtown from 2002-2004. He currently lives and works in Portland, OR.*

* translation: "First live, then philosophize."

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