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191 CHRYSTIE STREET
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Beside Myself

David Altmejd
Gil Batle
Sedrick Chisom
Vanessa Gully Santiago
Hugh Hayden
Junji Ito
Elizabeth Jaeger
Adam Putnam
TARWUK
Vanessa Thill
Nancy Youdelman

curated by Dan Herschlein
June 29 - August 3, 2018
opening reception: Friday, June 29, 6-8 pm

"...it makes us feel that it should not exist, or at least that it should not exist here. Yet if the object or entity is here, then the categories which we have up until now used to make sense of the world cannot be valid. The weird thing is not wrong, after all: it is our conceptions that must be inadequate."

- Mark Fisher, *The Weird and The Eerie*

My intention with this exhibition is to present different ways in which the narrative and the handmade can be used to refute the projection of culturally sanctioned ideals, and reveal the damaging effects that can occur when an individual either cannot or will not psychically incorporate those ideals into their personal sense of self. As Kaja Silverman describes in her book 'The Threshold of the Visible World,' one's ability to identify with a culture's image-ideal allows them the feeling of having a *Coherent Ego* or the sense of a *Moi*. The sense of *Moi* 'maintains itself by repudiating whatever it cannot swallow—by refusing to live in and through alien corporealities.' She refers to this complicated process of rejection and self-reinforcement as 'the principle of the self-same body,' which, in its patriarchal mode of operation, includes reading lack and absence into anything dissimilar to itself. But suppose that *Moi* could become double or triple, shared between bodies and through physical and emotional contradictions? What if we could learn to value and identify the fractured ego, the complicated and confused, the body in bits and pieces? Silverman suggests that the solution relies on the proliferation of more images, more texts—that it is the job of artists to flood the visual plane with various and complicated bodies, histories and personalities.

Through their very gothic and physical imagery of mutation, fragmentation, disintegration and masquerade, the works in *Beside Myself* position themselves as objects in opposition to the self-same body; by presenting themselves as its shadow. I believe that the works in this show demonstrate the ways in which art maintains not just the historical but also the magical ability to conceive of expansive and malleable identities in the midst of all those that society and culture prescribe.

- Dan Herschlein

David Altmejd (b. 1974, Montréal, Canada) lives and works in New York. Altmejd creates highly detailed sculptures that often blur the distinction between interior and exterior, surface and structure, representation and abstraction. For Altmejd, the process of making is paramount – he is interested in how the act of constructing an object and defying traditional material conventions generates meaning. His work was the subject of a major survey exhibition entitled *Flux* at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, France which travelled on to the MUDAM in Luxembourg and the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal, Canada (2014-15). He represented Canada at the Venice Biennale in 2007 and his first public sculpture *The Eye* (a commission from the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal) was unveiled in 2012.

Gil Batle (b. 1962, San Francisco, CA) lives and works in the Philippines. Using a dental drill, Batle carves intricate scenes derived from his time spent in jail onto the surfaces of ostrich eggs. Batle spent twenty years in and out of five California prisons for fraud and forgery during which time he became a skilled tattoo artist, earning him respect as well as protection among his fellow inmates. For the past ten years he has lived and worked on a remote island and since 2016 has had two solo exhibitions of his carved eggs at Ricco Maresca, New York, NY. His work has been featured in Artforum, the New York Times, the Paris Review and on CBS news.

Sedrick Chisom (b. 1989, Philadelphia, PA) is a painter and writer who lives and works in New York. His paintings use the romantic landscape as a site where the apocalyptic narratives of white supremacy, Christianity, and climate change intersect — a scenario in which most of the built environment has been obliterated and transformed into a toxic, hallucinatory wasteland. His concerns lie with the historical construction of whiteness in fiction as an antagonism between notions of civility and barbarism, the built environment versus the “natural” landscape, and the civic human subject in relation to the monstrous absolute Other. He received his BFA from The Cooper Union (2016), where he received The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Foundation Award For Exceptional Ability, and his MFA from Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University (2018). He was recently awarded The 2018-2019 VCU Fountainhead Fellowship in Painting and Drawing.

Vanessa Gully Santiago (b. 1984, Braintree, MA) lives and works in New York. Her drawings and paintings depict deeply psychological and intimate scenes that convey conflicting expressions of desire and detachment, vulnerability, and imbalances of power. Recent solo exhibitions include *No Touch* at Thierry Goldberg (2017) and *Private Accounts* (2016) at American Medium (both in New York). Her work has been included in exhibitions at 315 Gallery, Marinaro Gallery, Foxy Production, 247365 (all in New York), C. Grimaldis Projects in Baltimore, and Smart Objects in Los Angeles among many others. In 2013, she received her MFA from Rutgers University.

Hugh Hayden (b. 1983, Dallas, TX) lives and works in New York. Hayden's work considers various methods and different approaches to the idea of 'camouflage'; exploring the idea of blending into the natural landscape as a metaphor for assimilation into or rejection from greater social ecosystems. His first solo exhibition inaugurated White Columns' new location on Horatio Street, and his second is forthcoming at Lisson Gallery this fall. He received his MFA from Columbia University this past May, and his Bachelors of Architecture from Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, in 2007. His work has been included in numerous group exhibitions including Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, Gavin Brown's Enterprise; P.P.O.W.; Marinaro Gallery; Socrates Sculpture Park; and the Abrons Art Center (all New York.)

Junji Ito (b. 1963, Gifu, Japan) is a manga artist. Ito first began writing and drawing manga as a hobby while working as a dental technician in the early 90's. The universe Ito depicts is cruel and capricious; his characters often find themselves victims of malevolent unnatural circumstances for no discernible reason or punished out of proportion for minor infractions against an unknown and incomprehensible natural order. Some of the recurring themes of Ito's work include body horror, seemingly ordinary characters who begin to act out of irrational compulsion, the breakdown of society, deep sea organisms, and the inevitability of one's demise. Notable works include *Tomie*, a series chronicling an immortal girl who drives her stricken admirers to madness; *Uzumaki*, a three-volume series about a town obsessed with spirals; and *Gyo*, a two-volume story where fish are controlled by a strain of sentient bacteria called "the death stench."

Elizabeth Jaeger (b. 1988, New York, NY) sculptures embrace contradiction and obfuscate familiar objects, animals and people. Common figural elements are embedded into uncanny forms to create a disquieting scene. The work strives to challenge the viewer's relationships to their own physicality, preconceptions and surroundings. The viewer's response is the artist's main concern: interpersonal experience. Recent solo exhibitions include *Pommel* and *6:30* at Jack Hanley, *8:30* at And Now, and *Music Stand* at Eli Ping. The artist has participated in numerous group exhibitions including *Mirror Cells* at The Whitney Museum, *Greater New York* at MoMA PS1, *In Practice: Fantasy Can Invent Nothing New* at Sculpture Center, *Dreamers Awake* at White Cube, London, and *The Pain of Others* at Ghebaly Gallery.

Adam Putnam (b. 1973, New York, NY) Putnam's work employs a range of media including performance, sculpture, video, and photography to investigate intersections between stillness, thresholds, portraiture and architectural space. His work has been included in various exhibitions including at the Kunstverein Munich, Grazer Kunstverein, the 2008 Whitney Biennial, the 2nd Moscow Biennial, and the Busan Biennial, South Korea. It has also been exhibited at notable institutions including MoMA PS1, The Whitney Museum, and the Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo. His work is in the collection of the Perez Art Museum, Miami FL, the Museum of Old and New Art, Tasmania, Australia, and the Nasher Museum of Art, Durham, NC. Curatorial projects have included an exhibition of Martin Wong titled *Everything Must Go* at P.P.O.W and *Blow Both of Us* at Participant, Inc.

TARWUK (Bruno Pogacnik Tremow, b. 1981, Zagreb, Croatia and Ivana Vuksic b. 1981, Dubrovnik, Croatia) is an artist duo founded in 2014 who live and work between New York and Croatia. Often using found objects as a starting point for their work, their practice is based on collaboration with family members, none of which are artists. Recent exhibitions include *21070621-141332(2)* at The Museum of Fine Arts in Osijek, Croatia, *Host* at Showroom Mama, Rotterdam, *Tout est pret. Au premier signal que vous nous enverrez de Tireste, tous se leveront en masse pour l'indépendance de la Hongrie.* *Xrzah* at The Ethnographical Museum of Istria, Pazin, and *help you, help me* at Essex Flowers, New York.

Vanessa Thill (b. 1991, Berkeley, CA) is an artist and writer who lives and works in New York. Spillage and contamination of countless materials including oil, coffee, soap, ink, soil, and glue is the generative mode for her sculpture's surfaces, which are then desiccated over time and slicked down with resin. With their topographical features, the sculptures serve as a microcosm of planetary and microbial vastness. Later this year she will have a solo exhibition at Larrie, New York. Recently her work has been exhibited at Stepsister, Bible, and Nicelle Beauchene Gallery. Her writing has appeared in Artforum, Frieze, Brooklyn Rail, Art in America, the Art

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Newspaper, among others.

Nancy Youdelman (b. 1948, New York, NY) lives and works in Fresno, California. In 1970 she participated in the Feminist Art Program at Cal-Arts with faculty members Judy Chicago and Miriam Shapiro where they created the internationally acclaimed project, *Womanhouse* (1972). Youdelman received her BFA from CalArts in 1973 and her MFA with an emphasis in sculpture from UCLA in 1976. Her extensive exhibition history includes her 2017 retrospective *Nancy Youdelman: Fashioning a Feminist Vision 1972-2017* at the Fresno Art Museum, solo exhibitions at the Tai Modern, Santa Fe, and the Borland Gallery at Penn State University. This fall her work will be the subject of another retrospective at California State University in Northridge. Her work has been included in numerous group exhibitions at various venues including the CAPC Musée d'Art Contemporain in Bordeaux, France, A.I.R. Gallery, New York, the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles in California, SFMoMA, and LACMA. She has been the recipient of many awards including grants from the Pollock/Krasner, the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb and the Tree of Life Foundations.