

For immediate release

The Trick Behind Multiple Trick Ponies

Curated by Inés Arango-Guingue
Mayfield, 505 Marengo Ave.

November 18, 2023- January 20, 2024

Opening Reception: November 18, 2 to 6 pm



Aleksandra Walaszkek, detail from *Down Below*, 2022

"The dictator didn't realize the power of form over didactic narration."

Joyce Beckenstein on the work of María Magdalena Campos-Pons

The Trick Behind Multiple Trick Ponies will show the work of Aleksandra Walaszek (b. Poland, 1987), Vanessa Sandoval (b. Colombia, 1990), Kevin Hernández Rosa (b. Puerto Rico, 1994), and Dylan Languell (b. United States, 1985), four emerging sculptors who parasite languages akin to Minimalism and Conceptual Art to address social issues that, contemporarily, are primarily being explored through figuration. Their use of form lets the audience dig for a sliver of communication, a message relating to the artist's identity, or to take the work as it is presented. Sandoval, Languell, and Walaszek will create site-specific installations along the three sections of the space. Two video performances by Walaszek and Hernández Rosa will also be shown, along with two sculptures also by Hernández Rosa.

The exhibition has happily adapted to Mayfield—a crowded lived-in studio that moonlights as an artist-run space— and uses its low visibility as a reflection of the works' affinity with ambiguity. An array of smaller pieces will be deliberately camouflaged around the space's native objects, in hopes of setting off a sort of game of hide-and-seek with the audience and further highlighting the artists' preference for play over communication.

This show—like many others— aims to understand the persistence of artistic languages from the 20th century, while also suggesting that these languages aid artists in getting away with the most tyrannic questions the art world increasingly demands answers to, namely identity and subject matter. Stewarding the right of artists belonging to any community labeled as “marginalized” to refuse overt representation of themselves, their communities, and their issues, this show asserts that parasitizing hegemonic art is yet another trick they have up their sleeves to escape such tyrannic questions. Artists are not a one-trick pony.

Aleksandra Walaszek is an interdisciplinary artist, currently pursuing her MFA degree at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She received an MA in Media Arts (2011) from Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wroclaw. During her studies she was awarded exchange stays at École Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Strasbourg, France (2009-2010) and Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, USA (2010). Wałaszek is a co-founder of the FAH foundation and an artist-run space called Forma Otwarta in Oleśnica, Poland. She has received several scholarships including the Fulbright Graduate Student Award, an Individual Artist Grant from the Polish Cultural Institute in New York, and the President of Wrocław City Scholarship in the Field of Culture and the Arts for outstanding achievements. Often working collaboratively, she participated in many exhibitions, festivals, biennales, and art residencies. Her works have been exhibited nationally and internationally at various venues, including the Strasbourg Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Wrocław Contemporary Museum, 16th WRO Media Art Biennale among others. She has been Artist-in-Residence at [R.A.T.] Residencias Artísticas Por Intercambio in Mexico City, 18th Street Arts Center in Santa Monica, USA, Centre for Creative Activities in Ustka, Poland; AIR Wro in San Sebastián / Donostia, Spain; Paradise AIR in Matsudo, Japan; Hidden Places in Görlitz, Germany. Wałaszek tends to focus on subjects such as identity, memory, and history intertwined with geography and language. Her work has involved the creation of conceptually based objects, photography, and installations as well as happenings.

Vanessa Sandoval is a visual artist with a practice in the fields of sculpture, drawing, and installation. In 2014, she was a recipient of the BLOC grant, in Cali, Colombia. In 2016, she obtained a national fellowship in visual arts from the Ministry of Culture and participated in the 44th National Artists' Salon. In 2017, she was a resident of RÉSO in Biella, Italy, and was awarded the V Sara Modiano Prize in Bogotá. In 2018, she was invited to show her work at Nuevos Nombres, Banco de la República, Bogotá. She lived in Cali until 2019, where she coordinated the Documentary Center at Lugar A Dudas. That same year she was invited to participate in the exhibition *Voces Para Transformar Colombia* by the National Museum of Memory. She now lives in New York where, in 2022, she was one of the artists in residency at the Center for Book Arts, and participated in the 46th National Artist Salon in Colombia. She is currently doing an MFA at Hunter College, as a recipient of the NOIR scholarship for BIPOC CUNY students.

Kevin Hernández Rosa (b. 1994, Caguas, Puerto Rico) is an artist, writer, and rapper currently living and working in Hartford, CT. He received an MFA from the Yale School of Art in sculpture in 2021 and is currently an Adjunct Professor at the Hartford Art School. Hernández Rosa's work has been exhibited at Fall River Museum of Contemporary Art (Fall River, MA), Hunt Gallery (Toronto, Ontario, CA), Weather Proof (Chicago, IL), Hatred 2 (Brooklyn, NY), Slought Foundation (Philadelphia, PA), M23 (NYC), Ely Center of Contemporary Art (New Haven, CT), 891 N Main (Providence, RI), LeRoy Neiman Gallery (Columbia University, NYC), Hill-Stead Museum (Farmington, CT), Chelsea College of Art and Design (London, UK), and Art Lot (Brooklyn, NY). Before the end of 2023, his work is slated to be exhibited at the Austin Arts Center (Trinity College, Hartford, CT), as well as D.D.D.D. Pictures (NYC). His first book titled 'Brandishing, EX-WRITER, etc.' was published by Bench Press in 2018 and he was a 2021 Graham Foundation co-grantee.

Dylan Languell is an interdisciplinary artist and event organizer currently residing in Chicago. He received his MFA in Sculpture from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) and his BA in Art History from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). Languell has shown at the Institute of Contemporary Art at Virginia Commonwealth University and at Ice Box in Philadelphia. His work has been published in *New American Paintings* and *Emerge Journal*. His work navigates interior spaces from the body to architecture, archival practices of identity, disposal, and contextual histories through the lens of wonderment of how to be closer to art as a spiritual praxis and the greater public whether as spectacle or care.