

Maskenfreiheit

Felix Beaudry, Tim Brawner,
Cathleen Clarke, Naomi Rincón
Gallardo, Melissa Joseph, Grace
Kalyta, Kris Lemsalu & Teruko
Kushi, Florian Meisenberg,
Matt Morris, Narcissister

Margot Samel is pleased to present *Maskenfreiheit*, a group exhibition featuring artists Felix Beaudry, Tim Brawner, Cathleen Clarke, Naomi Rincón Gallardo, Melissa Joseph, Grace Kalyta, Kris Lemsalu & Teruko Kushi, Florian Meisenberg, Matt Morris, and Narcissister opening on July 20th, 2023.

Mikhail Bakhtin believed that a great social and political power laid in the pre-Renaissance carnival. The Carnavalesque, to the literary theorist and philosopher, was both a cultural phenomena, and a literary genre to follow, which inverted the powers of control dictated by the church and state through not just humor, but contact with the present moment in an embodiment of its antagonism. Through making comic material of the dominant present across all senses of the body, Bakhtin believed that no sets of rules were immune to the power of descriptive social rupture.

In the contemporary moment it may seem as though the carnivalesque is defending itself to the ever-growing exploitation of the individual. Where is impactful subversion found when control is dictated by the market of individuality, not far off aesthetically from what was once celebrated by carnival? *Maskenfreiheit* then takes up the call to find where this transformative break in dominant culture has moved, outside of the aesthetics of spectacle. To mask one's self—to drag the present in reflecting back to itself its own expectations, is core to many of the works in on view.

To mask of course, is both a chance to escape external constructions of self and a moment to complicate this internalized essentialist move towards individuality. Masking falls in dialogue with the emancipatory never-ending project of embodiment and the enchantment of the present. It reminds not just the subject wearing the mask but the viewer as well that both are performers of common culture and co-determine each other in the choreography of social struggle.

Felix Beaudry (b. 1996 in Berkeley, CA) works with textiles to form gloopy, unexpected, murky figures who lounge, explore, and indulge in narratives

of pleasure set against installations or knit tapestries that evoke medieval allegorical cloth. He graduated with a BFA from RISD in 2018. Recent solo exhibitions include *Old Man Essentials*, Tatjana Pieters, Ghent, Belgium; *Glob Monster*, SITUATIONS, New York; and *Congenital Knot*, SITUATIONS, New York. He has been featured in group exhibitions at The Bunker, West Palm Beach, FL; RISD Museum, Providence; New Discretions, Catskill, NY; ltd, LA; and Tatjana Pieters, Ghent, Belgium.

Tim Brawner (b. 1991 in Omaha, NE) uses techniques such as illustration and monochromatic paintings to render an uncanny affect of unease in his large paintings. He mines the space of grotesque and the weird hoping to distance the viewer from his subjects. He received an MFA from Yale School of Art in 2020. Solo exhibitions include *Lee*, Elder Gallery, Lincoln, NE; *Tim Brawner*, PAGE (NYC), New York, NY; *PAGE NYC*, NADA Projects, New York, NY; *Sometime Come the Mother, Sometime the Wolf*, Union Pacific, London; and *Fragment Gallery*, NADA Projects, New York, NY. He has been featured in group exhibitions including *Triple Monster*, August Zang Gallery, Brooklyn, NY; *Summer Exhibition*, PAGE (NYC), New York, NY; *Three Rooms*, GalleryELL, New York, NY; *Only When You're Called*, Yale University Gallery, New Haven, CT; *C.H.A.D., Ashes On Ashes*, New York, NY; *Yale Painting & Printmaking MFA*, Galerie Perrotin, New York; *Philip Seibel, Aks Misyuta, Tim Brawner*, Et AL: Brook Hsu & WSCHOD: Adam Shiu-Yang Shaw, Union Pacific, London; *Urgent*, Papa Projects, Minneapolis, MN; *Companions*, Union Pacific, London; *No Fear In Trying*, Unit London, London; and *OMGWTF*, Primary Projects, Miami, FL.

Cathleen Clarke (b. 1988 in Chicago, IL) is a painter whose mysterious work appears to pull forward from darkness, moments lost to time. Connected to the surrealist tradition of automatic writing, Clarke engages with portraiture, personal memory, and the passing of time in her works. She gained her BFA in Painting and Drawing at the Academy of Art University, San Francisco in 2014. She works and lives in Brooklyn, New York. Recent solo exhibitions include *Hungry Soul*, Nathalie Karg Gallery, New York, NY; *Whatever Hour You Woke There Was a Door Shutting*, Fou Gallery, Brooklyn, NY; *If You Ever Make it Home*, 625 Sutter Gallery, San Francisco in 2014. She has recently exhibited at venues including NARS Foundation in Brooklyn, Zhou B Art Center in Chicago, and Hang Gallery in San Francisco. She was selected to attend the NARS Foundation International Artist Residency in 2019, and was chosen as a finalist for the Hopper Prize Award in 2023. Clarke has an upcoming solo exhibition at Margot Samel.

Naomi Rincón Gallardo (b. 1979 in Raleigh, NC), is a visual artist and researcher currently living and working between Mexico City and Oaxaca. In her practice, Rincón Gallardo works through decolonial and feminist lenses to form speculative fictions, theater games, various popular music, and D.I.Y. costumes, constituting what she terms "counterworlds." Through this work, she turns to the knowledge embedded in pre-colonial myths to find anti-colonial poetic tools of dissent. She completed a PhD in Practice Program at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and was a beneficiary of the Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte, FONCA (2019–2022), Mexico. Recent solo exhibitions include *Una trilogía de cuevas (A Trilogy of Caves)*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Oaxaca, Oaxaca, Mexico (2020); *May your thunder break the sky*, Kunstraum Innsbruck, Innsbruck, Austria (2020); *Heavy Blood*, Museo Experimental El Eco, Mexico City, Mexico (2019); and *Opossum Resilience*, Parallel Oaxaca, Oaxaca, Mexico (2019). She has been featured in group exhibitions including the Venice Biennale (2022); São Paulo Biennial (2021); Berlin Biennale (2020); Stone Telling, Kunstraum Niederösterreich, Vienna, Austria (2019); FEMSA Biennial: *We Have Never Been Contemporary*, Zacatecas, Mexico (2018); *Prometheus: Four Artists From Mexico Revisit Orozco*, Benton Museum of Art at Pomona College, Claremont, U.S. (2017); and *Odardole: An imaginary their_story of naturepeoples, 1535–2017*, Schwules Museum, Berlin, Germany (2017); Nicaragua Biennial, Managua,

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Nicaragua (2016). She has performed in *En Cuatro Patas*, Pacific Standard Time Festival: LA/LA, The Broad, L.A., U.S. (2018) and *The Formaldehyde Trip*, Performance in Progress, SFMOMA, San Francisco, U.S. (2016).

Melissa Joseph (b. 1980 in Saint Marys, PA) lives and works in New York. In her layered textile works she addresses themes of memory, family history, and diasporic life in the west. Through the process of felting, her imagery takes on a hazy apparition, emerging to the eye like a memory nearly brought into focus, but just out of reach. Joseph received a BA in Individualized Study from New York University in 2003, an associate's degree in Textile Surface Design from the Fashion Institute of Technology in 2006, a Master's in Art Education from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2008, and a Master's in Fine Arts from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 2018. Her work has been shown in numerous exhibition spaces, such as Venus over Manhattan, New York, NY; The List Gallery, Swarthmore College, PA; New Art Dealer's Alliance, Miami, FL; the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Salt Lake City; Dieu Donn , NYC; Jeffrey Deitch, NYC; REGULARNORMAL, NYC; Fleisher Art Memorial, Philadelphia; Bradley Ertaskiran Gallery, Montreal; Bravin Lee, NYC; Rider University, Lawrenceville, NJ; The Delaware Contemporary, Wilmington, DE; Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia, PA; Rider University, Lawrenceville, NJ. She has been awarded residencies by numerous organizations, including the Museum of Arts and Design, Greenwich House Pottery, the Archie Bray Foundation, Fountainhead Arts, Dieu Donn , Textile Arts Center Artist, and Chautauqua School of Art. Joseph's work has been written about and featured in *Hyperallergic*, *Architectural Digest*, *CNN*, *New American Paintings*, and *Maake Magazine*.

Grace Kalyta (b. 1991 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada) makes oil paintings and sculptures finding the two strongly inter-related. Her paintings play with seduction in their close-crops of artifice and (faux-)opulence. In her paintings she unpacks the social coding and hierarchies bound in material and surface. Grace lives and works in Tiohti ke/Montreal. She received a BFA in 2018 with honours and is a current MFA candidate at Concordia University. Grace has attended residencies in Iceland (Nes Residency, 2021) and Greece (faveLAB, 2019), and shown her work with Pang e at Montreal's Plurale art fair, 2023. Her previous exhibitions include *Untitled*, Galerie Cache, Montreal, 2023; *Spaghetti Western*, GHAM & DAFE, Montreal, 2022; *Opi  H s*, Skagastr nd, Iceland, 2021; *Priv *, Montreal, 2020; *Textile Quintet*, Pirkos Tsikaliotis, Leonidio, Greece, 2019; *On the Pulse*, Eastern Bloc, Montreal, 2018.

Kris Lemsalu (b. 1985 in Tallinn, Estonia) lives and works in Tallinn and New York. Lemsalu's practice is a continual evolution of ideas, forms, anecdotes and personal histories, expressed through sculpture and performance, in which the division between life and art is blurred. She creates complex sculptures, installations, and performances that fuse the animal kingdom with humankind, nature with the artificial, beauty with repulsion, lightness with gravity, life with death. She studied at the Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn, Estonia; Danmarks Designskole, Copenhagen, Denmark; and the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna, Austria. Lemsalu represented Estonia in the 58th Venice Biennial in 2019. In 2020 she was awarded the Grand Prize from the Cultural Endowment of Estonia. Recent solo and two-person exhibitions include: *Peace @ 295 Church Street*, Margot Samel, New York, NY (2022); *Angels Gone Pissing*, Temnikova & Kasela, Tallinn, EE (2022); *Love Stories*, Meyer Kainer, Vienna, AT (2022) *A Snail's Tale with Kyp Malone*, High Line Art, New York, US (2021); *Hunt Kastner*, Prague, CZ (2021); *Going Going with Kyp Malone*, Den Frie, Copenhagen, DK (2020); *Love Song Sing-Along with Kyp Malone*, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, DE (2020); *Love Song Sing Along (Once Again With Feeling!)*, with Kyp Malone, Kai Art Center, Tallinn, Estonia (2020); *Keys Open Doors*, Secession, Vienna, AT (2018); *4LIFE*, Goldsmiths Centre for Contemporary Art, London, UK (2018); *The Wild Ones*, Koppe Astner, Glasgow, UK (2017–2018). Selected

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group exhibitions include: *Earth Spells, Witches of the Anthropocene*, Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery, London, UK (2023); *THE PARTY. Between representation and turmoil*, MAK Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna, AT (2022) *Growing Out? Growing Up? Contemporary Art Collecting in the Baltics*, Zuzeum Art Centre, Riga, LV (2022); *We'll Be Right Back, You Just Keep Playing!*, Tallinn Art Hall, Tallinn, EE (2022); *Jean-Marie Appriou, Amy Feldman, Louisa Gagliardi, Kris Lemsalu, Conny Maier, Sofia Mitsola, Tobias Pils*, Eva Presenhuber, Zurich, CH (2022); *The Well of Wisdom*, Meetfactory, Prague, CZ (2022); *Airing Dirty Laundry with Kyp Malone*, 7th Athens Biennale: Eclipse, Athens, GR (2021); *Diversity United. Contemporary European Art*, Moscow – Berlin – Paris, Stiftung für Kunst und Kultur, Bonn, DE (2021); *Human After All*, Princessehof National Museum of Ceramics, Leeuwarden, NL (2020); *Up to and Including Limits*, Muzeum Susch, Zürich, CH (2019); *Metamorphosis. Art in Europe Now*, Fondation Cartier, Paris, FR (2019); *There and Back Again*, curated by Kati Kivinen and Saara Hacklin, Kiasma, Helsinki, FI (2018); *Steps to Aeration*, curated by Sarah McCrory, Tanya Leighton, Berlin, DE (2018); and *The Hierophant*, curated by Aaron Moulton; *Metamorphosis*, curated by Zdenek Felix and presented at KAI 10 / Arthena Foundation, Düsseldorf, DE.

Teruko Kushi (b. 1994 in Boston, MA) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She holds a Bachelors of Fine Arts degree from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts with a focus in painting and sculpture. Kushi has developed her craft as a patina specialist and metal crafts person through working as an architectural tig welder and metal fabricator in New York City. Kushi is a guest lecturer and critic at Rhode Island School Design where she has taught courses on experimental metal fabrication. Honors include Dana Pond Painting Award, the Boit Award, Nicole Hollis x FDC Architectural Design Grant Honorable Mention and a recipient of the Linde Family Scholarship Grant. Recent exhibitions include: *FOCUS GROUP 4*, Von Ammon Co Gallery, Washington DC (2023) *Upon Further Reflection*, Philip Lim Showroom, New York City (2023) *Selected Collaboration with Kris Lemsalu*, NADA Art Fair Miami (2022) *Inside Out Group Exhibition*, NYCxDESIGN, New York City (2021) *Crossing Borders*, Periphery Space Gallery, Rhode Island (2017) Medal Award Gala Selected Group Exhibition, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2017) Stand Up Exhibition, Kayafas Gallery, Boston (2017) *The Salon Selected Group Exhibition*, Peabody Essex Museum (2017) in Boston, Massachusetts.

Florian Meisenberg's (b. 1980 in Berlin, Germany) work oscillates between and regularly encompasses painting, installation and film. His paintings simultaneously conjure lightness and depth; they vary greatly in density and rendering, employing multi-layered compositions that display themes of digital apprehension and abstract interiors alongside cartoonish figures and scrawling statements. His delicate, oblique films capture intrigue in the banal moments of contemporary existence. He has solo exhibitions with Kate MacGarry, London; E.A Shared Space, Tbilisi, Georgia; Simone Subal Gallery, New York; Kunstpaterre, Munich; Avlskarl, Copenhagen; Zabłudowicz Collection, London; Kunstpalais Erlangen, Germany; Wentrup Gallery, Berlin; Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles; and SIGNAL, New York. He has been featured in group exhibitions including at Educational and Cultural Center Broumov, Broumov, Czech Republic; Wentrup, Berlin, Germany; Jetzt! Junge Malerei in Deutschland, exhibition in four locations in Germany, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Museum Wiesbaden, Kunstsammlungen Chemnitz Museum Gunzenhauser, and Deichtorhallen Hamburg; Künstlerhaus Bremen, Germany; Museum der Bildenden Kuenste Leipzig, Germany; neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst, Berlin, Germany; Zabłudowicz Collection, London; Zeppelin Museum, Friedrichshafen, Germany; Broehan Museum, Berlin, Germany; Zentrum für Kunst und Medien, Karlsruhe, Germany; Neuer Kunstverein Aschaffenburg, Germany; ICA, Philadelphia; and Kiasma Finnish National Gallery, Helsinki, Finland. Florian Meisenberg's work is part of the collections of the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, USA; Boros Collection, Berlin, Germany; Zabłudowicz Collection, London, UK; Kiasma Museum, Helsinki, Finland;

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and the Sammlung Stadtparkasse Düsseldorf im Museum Kunstpalast, Germany. In 2018, Distanz published Meisenberg's third monograph with the title: SOMEWHERE, SIDEWAYS DOWN, AT AN ANGLE, BUT VERY CLOSE.

Matt Morris (b. 1985 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana) is a multihyphenate creative whose work spans education practices, painting and sculpture, performance, perfumery, writing, curating, and more. Each approach to making for Morris is a tool for inquiry into the psychoanalytic, historic, and social valences of femininity, repression, and the political realities of subjecthood. Morris earned a BFA in 2007 from the Art Academy of Cincinnati, Cincinnati OH, and an MFA in Art Theory + Practice from Northwestern University, as well as a Certificate in Gender + Sexuality Studies. In 2017 he earned a Certification in Fairyology from Doreen Virtue, PhD. Morris is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He has presented artwork nationally and internationally including at Tiger Strikes Asteroid, New York; RUSCHMAN, Berlin, Germany; Krabbesholm Højskole, Skive, Denmark; 12.26, Aspen, CO; DePaul Art Museum, and Gallery 400, Chicago, IL; The Mary + Leigh Block Museum of Art, Evanston, IL; The Elmhurst Art Museum, Elmhurst, IL; The Poor Farm, Manawa, WI; and The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH. He is a contributor to Artforum.com, Flash Art, The Seen and X-TRA Contemporary Art Quarterly; and many others.

Narcissister (b. 1971, New York, NY) is a Brooklyn-based artist and performer. Her work focuses on race, gender, and sexuality through a constant renegotiation of the self, and its inherent performative nature within contemporary society against heteronormative structures of surveillance and policing. Drawing from the myth of Narcissus, self possession becomes a strategy where humor is deployed to turn a lens back on the ways contemporary society rewards a specific kind of female narcissism. She received a B.A. in Afro-American Studies at Brown University and studied modern dance at Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. Solo exhibitions include: *Wimmin*, Artpace, San Antonio, TX (2019); *Narcissister, Studies for Participatory Sculptures*, Participant Inc, New York, NY (2014); *New Video Work*, Petrella's Imports, New York, NY (2013); *Narcissister is You*, Envoy Enterprises, New York, NY (2013). Selected group exhibitions include: *Spikes that bite*, Margot Samel, New York, NY (2022-23); *Role Play*, Fondazione Prada, Milan, Italy (2022); *pornotopia revised*, Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna, Austria (2022); *Friends & Family*, Magenta Plains, New York, NY (2021); *Punch*, Deitch Projects, Los Angeles, CA (2019); *A Detached Hand*, Magenta Plains, New York, NY (2019); *Sculpture for People*, Deitch Projects, Los Angeles, CA, (2019); *No body to talk to*, Invisible Exports, New York, NY (2019); *Honey*, Bodega Gallery, New York, NY (2018); *Sculpture for People*, Deitch Projects, New York, NY (2018); *Così fan tutte*, Archivio di Videoarte del Veneto, Verona, Italy (2016); *This one is smaller than this one*, Postmasters Gallery, New York, NY (2016); *Harlem Postcards*, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY (2015); *Check Your Vernacular*, Rhode Island School of Design, Memorial Hall, Providence, RI (2014); *Draped Down*, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY (2014). Upcoming group exhibitions include: *Multiplicity: Collage in Contemporary America*, Frist Art Museum, Nashville, TN, in September 2023; *The Cult of Beauty*, Wellcome Collection, London, UK in October 2023.

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