

Material GIRLS

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established 2016

MATERIAL GIRLS: *My Shell Makes Itself*

November 8 - December 15, 2019

5-50 Gallery

5-50 51st Avenue

Long Island City, NY 11101

Opening Reception: Friday, November 8th, 2019, 7-10pm

Inspired by the oyster reefs that once surrounded and protected New York City, MATERIAL GIRLS presents *My Shell Makes Itself*, a group show & installation that takes the seashell as its central metaphor. Simultaneously soft and strong, an individual shell-bound animal builds, alters, and repairs its own source of shelter and protection. Through the formation of this boundary, the life experience and external conditions of the organism are inscribed into the resulting shape and coloring of its shell. Reciprocally, the shell's environment is profoundly impacted by its presence (or absence).

"So I can say that my shell made itself, without my taking any special pains to have it come out one way rather than another, but this doesn't mean that I was absent-minded during that time; I applied myself, instead, to the act of secreting..."

- Italo Calvino, *The Spiral*

My Shell Makes Itself is a collaboration between nine artists: Cameron Cameron, Hilliary Gabryel, Basia Goszczynska, Bahareh Khoshooee, Devra Freeland, Claire Lachow, Gracelee Lawrence, Emily Lee, and Rachael Starbuck. The artists have each contributed handwoven nets tied across distances, which when connected, reconfigure the interior and loosen the rigidity of the gallery. Individual works by each artist are interwoven, sat behind, presented and entangled in the net installation.

Our shell is a porous form. A vessel that is also permeable, the net is simultaneously holding and letting go. This exhibition features a spectrum of porousness— expressed in architectural interventions, objects, and collective conversation— together funneling, filtering, flowing, and supporting. Conceived as a means to tie our practices together across the country, our shell, much like an animal's shell, is a byproduct of labor. A physical record of a repeated gesture, its knots and materials collect muscle memory and build community. We reconsider solid circumstances as porous openings, affording agency in the face of distance and the uncompromising. Both literal and metaphorical perspectives combine to reimagine material realities.

MATERIAL GIRLS is a non-hierarchical collective of artists dedicated to building community, fostering collaboration, and opening up space through facilitating exhibitions, educational programming, and tool-sharing initiatives. *My Shell Makes Itself* is made possible (in part) by the Queens Council on the Arts with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

Cameron Cameron lives in Los Angeles, CA. She received her BFA from the University of Texas at Austin in 2014, attended Virginia Commonwealth University Summer Studio Program in 2015 and received an MFA from UCLA in 2018. Cameron uses sculptural interventions to compensate for generic imagery, and questions how the mundane may represent the feeling of loss or longing around the disorder of the day-to-day. She has participated in Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Ox-Bow School of Art, Grin City Collective Residency, and the Art Students League of New York. cameron-cameron.com @winter_shorts

Devra Freeland (1990-2019) was a sculptor, print maker, and video artist primarily working in Brooklyn, NY. Her work explores geology and climate change from a millennial and ecofeminist perspective. Freeland received her MFA from Rhode Island School of Design and her BA from Oberlin College. She was a founding member of MATERIAL GIRLS, and participated in the Women's Studio Workshop Residency (2018), Arctic Circle Residency (2017), Socrates Sculpture Park Emerging Artist Fellowship (2017), Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Workspace Residency (2016-2017), and the Virginia Commonwealth University Summer Studio Program (2013). devrafreeland.com

Hilliary Gabryel lives and works in Queens, NY. Her work is aspirational, echoing the immediacy of the consumerist market and commenting on luxury and feminine expectations. She received her BFA from Virginia Commonwealth University, as well as attended the Virginia Commonwealth University Summer Studio Program. She is a founding member of MATERIAL GIRLS and co-founder of the interdisciplinary Ridgewood, Queens project space ERA VI VII VI (2014-2016). Her work has been shown in New York, NY; Los Angeles, CA; Austin, TX; Minnesota, MN; Richmond, VA. Residencies & awards include the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Workspace Residency Finalist 2019, Vermont Studio Center Fellowship, the Wassaic Project, ASMBLY Session #1. hkgabryel.com @hilliarygabryel

Claire Lachow is an artist & writer. Her work maps connections between language, bodies, and ideology, exploring how the resulting constellation is objectified and intensified in technology. She is the recipient of a 2019 Red Bull Arts Detroit residency & fellowship. Selected exhibitions include IRL @ MoHA, the Governors Island Art Fair, Super Dutchess, SPRING/BREAK Art Show, Local Host Gallery, and Schema Projects. She is the author of a 2019 chapbook "Flat World". Her artwork and writing have been published in Contango Journal, Foundations Magazine, and the Atlas Review. Lachow received a BA from Oberlin College and lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. clairelachow.com @clayore

Gracelee Lawrence's work deals with relationships between food, the body, and technology. She is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor of Sculpture at Kenyon College. In the past several years she has been fortunate to attend twenty residency programs in the US and abroad and opened her first solo show in New York at Thierry Goldberg in May 2019. In late 2017 she returned from 15 months as a Visiting Artist in the Multidisciplinary Department of Art at Chiang Mai University and assistant to artist Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook on a Luce Scholars Fellowship. She completed her MFA in Sculpture + Extended Media at the University of Texas at Austin in 2016 and graduated from Guilford College with an honors degree in Sculpture. graceleelawrence.com @gleeleelawlee

Rachael Starbuck lives and works in Austin, TX. She received her MFA in Studio Art from the University of Texas at Austin in 2017 and her BFA in Sculpture + Extended Media from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2011. Starbuck makes objects and videos operating with a tactile erotics— thin skins and fluid bodies negotiating the space between distance and proximity. She is co-founder of nomadic curatorial collective Partial Shade, has been a resident at ACRE Projects, The Contemporary Artists Center at Woodside, The Wassaic Project and The Vermont Studio Center and has shown work in Richmond, VA; Providence, RI; Chicago, IL; Austin, TX; Houston, TX; New York, NY; and London, UK. rachaelstarbuck.com @starbuckra

Basia Goszczynska is a Brooklyn-based artist working at the intersection of art and environmental activism. She received her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and her MFA from the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University. In addition to numerous group shows and film festival screenings, she has presented her work in exhibitions at Arcadia Earth, Chashama's Space To Present, the Mid-Manhattan Public Library and OCAD University. She has received fellowships from the Vermont Studio Center and the Massachusetts Cultural Council as well as the Ray Stark Film Prize. BasiaGoszczynska.com @basia_gosz

Bahareh Khoshooee is a multidisciplinary artist born in Tehran, Iran in 1991, the year the Internet was made available for unrestricted commercial use. In her work she explores the underlying tension between reality and fiction, confabulation and manipulation, false memories and alternative facts. She attended Skowhegan School of Art and Painting in 2018, and received her MFA in Studio Art from the University of South Florida in 2017. Khoshooee has presented her work at the Orlando Museum of Art (Orlando), NADA MIAMI 2018, Elsewhere (New York), Housing (New York), and Rawson Projects (New York). She has been included in group exhibitions at C24 Gallery (New York), Museum of Photography (Stockholm), 2018 Taiwan Annual (Taipei), Fajr International Film Festival 2018 (Tehran), and the Museum of Fine Arts St. Petersburg. Her work has been featured in The Huffington Post, The Guardian, Artnet News, Vice, The Metro, and The Creators Project. She is currently in residence at Baxter St Camera Club New York. Baharehkhoshooee.com @khoshooee

Emily Lee investigates form as social apparatus through sculpture and writing. Her interdisciplinary works consider the relationship between systems and subjects, offering alternatives to traditional dynamics and their physical manifestations. Lee earned a BFA in Art History Honors, a BFA in Studio Art, and a certificate in Museum Studies from The University of Texas at Austin. She is the recipient of the Roy Crane Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Arts and the Rhodes Endowed Presidential Scholarship. She is the founder of open exhibition project Crit Club. Selected exhibitions include The Visual Arts Center, The Cohen New Works Festival, Museum of Human Achievement, Cage Match, Pump Project, and Fusebox Festival. She has attended Ox-Bow School of Art, Penland School of Craft, and Marchutz School of Fine Art. leeemily.com @emilyelizabethlee