

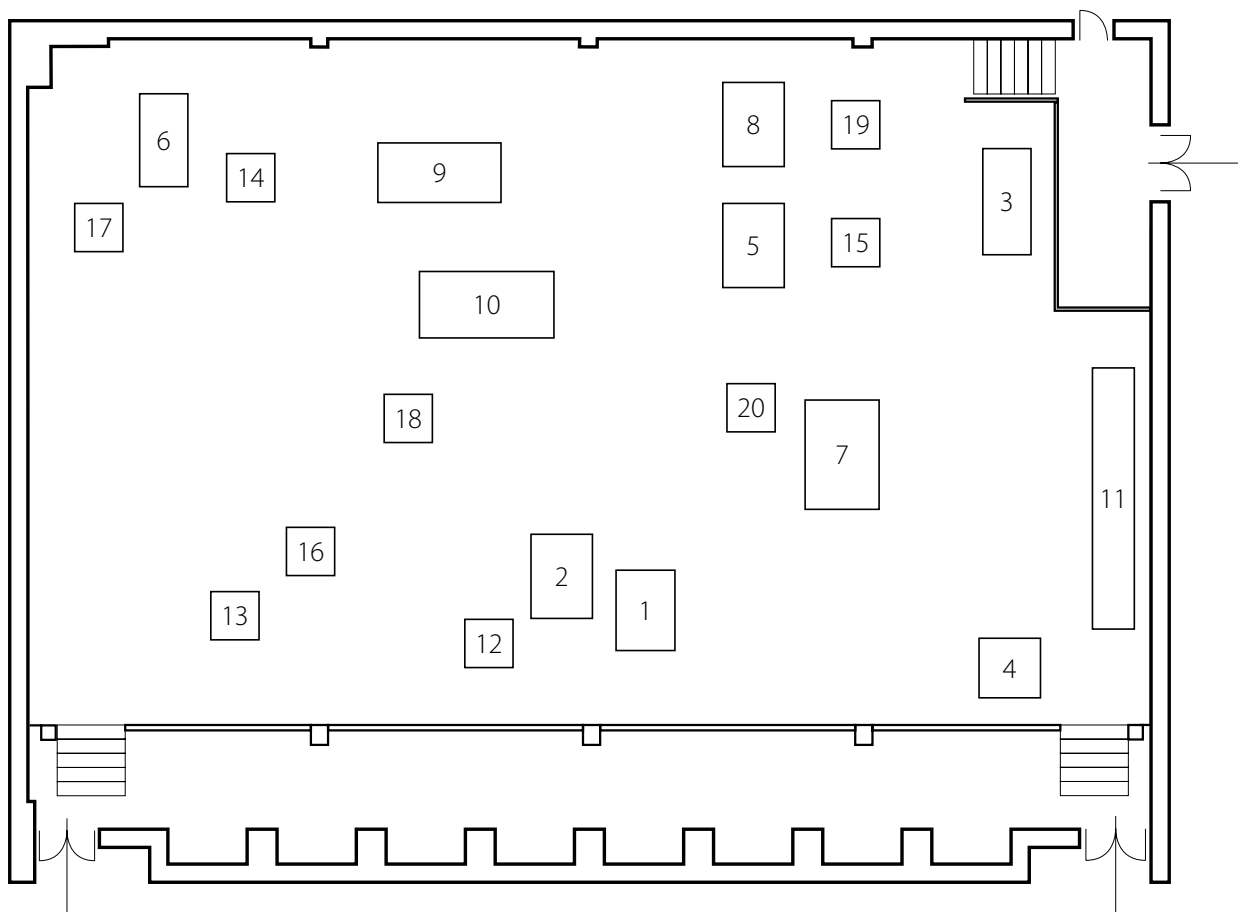
NINA DE FELICE GUN SHOW

18.09-31.10.2026

CURATOR: MARTYNA MILLER

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Miejski Ośrodek Sztuki
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| 1. <i>Car pt. 2 (Pair)</i> , oil on canvas, 140 × 95 cm | 11. Nina DeFelice i Michael Kelley, <i>Gun Show</i> |
| 2. <i>Car Pt. 1 (Dent)</i> , oil on canvas, 140 × 95 cm | 12. <i>Toy Gun 001 (Dinosaurier)</i> , oil on canvas |
| 3. <i>Gun Show</i> , oil on canvas, 140 × 95 cm | 13. <i>Toy Gun 004 (Shot)</i> , oil on wood, 25 x 25 cm |
| 4. <i>Bullet, Dog (1)</i> , oil on canvas, 140 × 95 cm | 14. <i>Toy Gun 003 (AR)</i> , oil on canvas, 50 x 40 cm |
| 5. <i>Doug</i> , oil on canvas, 140 × 95 cm | 15. <i>Toy Gun 002 (Big Shock)</i> , oil on canvas, 23 x 30 cm |
| 6. <i>Shoot</i> , oil on canvas, 170 × 125 cm | 16. Archival material |
| 7. <i>Toy Militia</i> , oil on canvas, 125 × 170 cm | 17. Archival material |
| 8. <i>Remington</i> , oil on canvas, 170 × 125 cm | 18. Archival material |
| 9. <i>Class</i> , oil on canvas, 125 × 170 cm | 19. Archival material |
| 10. <i>Bullet</i> , object made of plastic toy guns | 20. Archival material |

GUN SHOW is an ongoing series of works by Nina De Felice, developed since 2018, that examines the pervasive, obsessive gun culture permeating everyday life in the United States. The title itself carries a double meaning: gun show refers both to an event where sellers meet with potential buyers — and to a colloquial expression for showing off one's muscles. This linguistic shift reveals a mechanism characteristic of gun culture: the gun is not only a tool of violence, but also a sign, a gesture, a symbol of strength, and an element of everyday language. Americans, consciously or unconsciously, refer to it through words, images, and body language.

Nina De Felice, born and raised in the United States and now living in Berlin, approaches this subject from a personal perspective. Her experience is marked by questions of safety and concern for her child. The violence embedded in everyday American life became one of the reasons for the artist's emigration and her search for a place where she could safely start a family. GUN SHOW is not, however, a straightforward story about leaving America behind. It is an attempt to confront a legacy that cannot simply be left behind — a culture, its images, and mythologies that shaped the artist and continue to inform her memory.

De Felice's paintings emerge at the intersection of cultural clichés, American icons, and images drawn from cinema — a visual language that for decades has shaped the global imagination and romanticized violence. The artist examines how the fascination with guns is produced, repeated, and exported, as well as how images of violence move between popular culture, private experience, and the social imaginary. As a US citizen, she confronts the question of how guns have become part of the American experience and how one might negotiate one's own relationship to this legacy through its representations.

Family photographs as well as discarded photographs of strangers, which De Felice collected over years, serve as the starting point for the paintings. They connect the past with the future, and the social dimension with the artist's intimate history — the history of a daughter, granddaughter, and mother. The photographs undergo a painterly transformation that does not so much reconstruct them as bring out the tension between what is visible and hidden, personal and political. The shimmering surface of the paintings simultaneously reveals the striking power of iconography: the ability of images

to transmit meanings, emotions, and ideologies, often beyond our awareness.

De Felice's characteristic technique is based on the laborious application of individual strokes of oil paint. Successive lines build the image like threads in a woven structure. The surface is at once intense and trembling, as though the image were perpetually in the process of becoming. This method of painting also becomes a metaphor for memory — for the way stories and experiences are passed down between generations, inscribed in gestures, images, and objects, and then continually rewritten.

For this reason, the exhibition also takes the form of an archive. On the backs of the canvases, the artist reconstructs handwritten notes by the women in her family. It was they who, caring for memory and family bonds, recorded the context of the individual photographs. De Felice returns to these writings, enlarges them, and places them under protection, transferring them from the private circulation of memory into the exhibition space. The archive is therefore not merely a document of the past, but a living structure of relationships — it shows us a way of remembering others and our-selves.

In this dimension, GUN SHOW also becomes a story of nostalgia — of a time gone by and a place geographically distant, yet still present in memory. America is simultaneously a home and a country the artist consciously left; a source of closeness and unease, love and violence. The exhibition creates an intense, critical dialogue between the private and the public. It is an assemblage of politics, images, family histories, and cultural myths that permeate one another, inadvertently infecting and weaving our biographies together.

Alongside the paintings, the exhibition presents video work and an object — a cartridge enlarged to gigantic proportions, constructed from a collection of toy guns gathered by the artist. The object embodies one of the project's fundamental tensions: the boundary between play and violence, fantasy and reality, childhood innocence and a culture in which guns are an omnipresent element of the imagination.

GUN SHOW is therefore as much a story about violence as it is about immense love. About rebellion in the name of one's own well-being, and at the same time about accepting what — however uncomfortable — remains a part of us.

Martyna Miller

Nina De Felice is an American painter and installation artist. She earned her BFA at the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design at George Washington University in 2012 and was the recipient of the 2012 Ethel Lorraine Bernstein Memorial Scholarship. After completing her studies, she moved to Berlin, Germany, where she continues to live and work, exhibiting throughout Europe and collaborating with artists in Berlin.

Her work focuses on themes of nostalgia and cultural influences. Currently, she is creating work under the title *Gun Show* examining American gun culture as a cultural export and its effects on language, gestures, behaviour, imagery and everyday habits. Simultaneously, she is working on a series titled *In My Belly*, which began as an experiment to paint all the vessels in her apartment and, after becoming a mother and becoming a form of a vessel herself, now navigates the emotions withheld between parents and children.