



**Julia Wachtel & Wendy White**  
*Airllok or Gazing Into the Void*  
von ammon co  
06 February - 14 March 2021

Wachtel's first-ever single-motif series depicts one repeated, serialized subject: a white man with his head in a hole. Drawing from various techniques of image appropriation, Wachtel either directly lifts the likeness of these men from existing photographs or from drawn caricatures. This exceptionally particular image—of the white man hiding his face, either out of denial, shame, fear, or self-justification—attracts new sociopolitical associations at an overwhelming rate—at the time of writing this release, almost daily. Wachtel's painterly project has sought to deconstruct the semiotics of media (both traditional and digital) and to reconstruct it within the language of painting. This has typically involved the juxtaposition of unrelated images to create synthetic effects of dark humor and critique. In this series, Wachtel concerns herself with only one recurring image, as a synthesis of opposites—the pathetic, pratfall figure is humorous in its clumsy, struthious oblivion; the implications that subtend this awkward stance are those of unspeakable existential horror.

Wendy White's three new, monumentally scaled mobiles involve the index of visual archetypes that the artist has developed throughout the course of her career: examples include a vector image of a black rainbow, a heart shaped from chunky pixels, a rain or tear droplet, a peace sign. While vaguely familiar, these signs lack a clear referent, and hover in a non-logocentric space, wherein the particular anxieties of childhood, adolescence and adulthood intersect depending on the viewer's perspective. Like Wachtel, White is concerned with the reindexing of cultural semiotics and their subsequent reconstruction as simultaneously absurd, melancholy and fearsome art objects. As infantilization of the American consumer becomes an overt marketing strategy and as screens supplant real objects as the means to soothe a child, White's sculptures straddle an in-between space: an abandoned realm of things on one side, and an uncertain future of virtual image-objects on the other.

von ammon co is a contemporary art gallery based in Georgetown, Washington DC and founded in 2019. One of the only privately-run contemporary art spaces in the US capitol, the gallery's agenda is to exhibit important exhibitions on a project basis by international artists. *Airllok or Gazing Into the Void* is the ninth project in its current location. The gallery is open Friday through Sunday, 12pm to 6pm and by appointment. Please email [info@vonammon.co](mailto:info@vonammon.co) for additional information.