



Arrows of Desire: Harry Gould Harvey IV and Faith Wilding
September 9, 2021 - November 28, 2021

Friends, collaborators, and intergenerational activists whose practices both enrich and reflect one another in this exhibition, Harry Gould Harvey IV and Faith Wilding have emerged from the pandemic in a state of mutual reverence. Hinged by their shared devotion to William Blake (1757-1827), a gravitational force that has been overt throughout both careers, Wilding and Harvey embrace the apocalyptic language and imagery of the Romantic writer and artist, whose illustrated poem Milton (1804-1811) titles the show.

Railing against the Industrial Revolution and institutional religion, Blake's poem offers "arrows of desire" to combat the "dark Satanic Mills" that seeped across the English landscape during his lifetime. Harvey has spent much of his life among the historic textile factories that dominate Fall River, MA, along with the many Catholic churches that serve the Portuguese, Latinx, and Cape Verdean communities that continue their labor in these 19th century buildings. His work incorporates both architectural and devotional detritus from this environment, along with Victorian Gothic elements—such as the organ of *Support Structure / -Art Saves!* (2021)—culled from demolitions in nearby Newport, RI mansions and from building clean-outs throughout the city.

A prolific draftsman, Harvey produces delicate works on paper framed in elaborate, hand-wrought wood both foraged and found. His excessive and playful—if at times morbid—application of bright red casting wax as sculptural material has evolved to include its intended use in crafting bronze forms, such as the custom mending plates that hold many of his pieces together. This dual approach is most apparent in *Feral Furnace / Spectral Reality* (2021), a grouping of four industrial heaters, models that are still in use—and have caused historic fires—in Fall River mills. Harvey has sanctified these objects through the application of cathedral-like wax structures of chains and organic forms melted in the studio and left as-is, or sent to the foundry and transmuted into bronze. Fire for Harvey, Wilding, and Blake is redemptive via destruction, and Harvey's critique of institutions, whether religious, capitalist, or educational, surges throughout the work.

Paired for a two-person exhibition originally scheduled for summer 2020, Wilding and Harvey have spent the last two years swapping influential books, spending long periods of time in one another's studios, and taking frequent hikes through the forests of southern New England. The centerpiece of the show features Wilding's installation of *Flow* (2010-ongoing) and *Tears* (2004-ongoing), supported by intricate wooden pedestals designed and fabricated by Harvey for this presentation. The tender text strewn watercolors of *Tears* are themselves collaborations, homages to the writers, poets, and theorists (mostly women) who have influenced Wilding through her decades of feminist organizing and artistic production, quotes from Virginia Woolf, Emma Goldman, and H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) alongside contemporaries such as artist Sharon Hayes.

A series of ten archival images of Wilding's radical feminist performances from the 1970s and 1980s have been enlarged and enframed by Harvey in reclaimed wood. The ephemeral nature of performance, now concretized in archives, has been reimagined in this work as ritualized study. Approaching these historically significant moments as an act of devotion, Harvey offers a model of intimate engagement with artistic predecessors as spiritual, one that Wilding has advanced throughout the four decades of her career.

Kate Kraczon, Director of Exhibitions and Chief Curator
Brown Arts Institute / David Winton Bell Gallery

Harry Gould Harvey IV (b. 1991, Fall River, MA; lives Fall River, MA) is an artist and curator whose practices are embedded in community and social justice. His work is featured in *Soft Water Hard Stone*, the 2021 New Museum Triennial, New York, and he has had numerous exhibitions at Bureau, New York and at national and international spaces including Atlanta Contemporary, Atlanta, GA (2018) and GRIN, Providence (2016). In 2020 Harvey and his wife, artist Brittani Ann Harvey, founded the Fall River Museum of Contemporary Art (FR MOCA) on the first floor of the historic Granite Mills textile mill. Previously, his roving curatorial platform Pretty Days, co-founded with Gregory Kalliche, produced projects in Providence and Miami, FL.

Faith Wilding (b. 1943, Colonia Primavera, Paraguay; lives Providence) is a renowned feminist artist, writer, and educator who is currently a Visiting Scholar at Brown University's Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women. For over four decades her work has remained at the intersections of feminism, social justice, cyberfeminism, biotechnology, radical pedagogy, and eco-feminism. Wilding co-initiated the Feminist Art Programs at California State University, Fresno, and CalArts, Los Angeles in the early 1970s, and was a founding member of the feminist art movement in Southern California, chronicled in her book *By Our Own Hands* (Double XX, Los Angeles, 1976). She is often cited for her influential performance piece *Waiting* (1972)—reimagined in 2007 as *Waiting With*—and *Crocheted Environment* (widely referred to as *Womb Room*, 1972). Both of these works were developed and debuted at Womanhouse, Los Angeles, the dilapidated Hollywood mansion remade as an arts space by Wilding and her professors and peers in the Feminist Art Program.

Wilding co-founded, and collaborates with, subRosa, a cyberfeminist cell of cultural producers using Bio-Art and tactical feminist performance in the public sphere to explore and critique the intersections of information and biotechnologies in women's bodies, lives, and work. She is the author of many published essays on feminist art and art history, including in *The Power of Feminist Art* (Abrams, 1995); as well as writings on cyberfeminism and collective feminist work (with subRosa) in *Domain Errors* (2003). Her retrospective *Faith Wilding's Fearful Symmetries*, organized by Threewalls, Chicago in 2014, traveled to multiple venues, and Wilding's work has been featured in major museum surveys including *Fiber: Sculpture 1960-present*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2014); *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution*, MOCA, Los Angeles (2007); *Sexual Politics*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (1996); *Division of Labor: "Women's Work" in Contemporary Art*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York (1995); as well as *documenta X*, Kassel, Germany (1997).