

BLAIR SAXON-HILL: *TO NO ENDING EXCEPT OURSELVES*



The stones we have thrown I hear

fall, glass-clear through the year. In the valley

confused actions of the moment

fly howling from tree-top

to tree-top, quieting

in air thinner than now's, gliding

like swallows from mountain-top

to mountain-top till they

reach the furthest plateaus

along the edge of existence. Where

all our deeds fall

Glass-clear

to no ending

except ourselves.

-“The Stones” by Tomas Tranströmer, translated by Patty Crane

JOAN is pleased to present Blair Saxon-Hill’s exhibition *to no ending except ourselves*, an installation of sculptures, arranged into abstract figures resembling characters on a stage. Her two and three dimensional assemblages are constructed of handmade and borrowed materials such as velvet, clay, rags, silk, beaded handbags, coat hangers, sticks and umbrellas. Along the back wall, these ramshackle figures appear to be marching after taking up arms.

For Saxon-Hill, this body of work is directly inspired by the collective anxiety felt after months of political tumult leading up to the 2016 presidential election. She creates a chaotic scene—the contorted faces of figures and their broken bodies strike a balance between the haunting and humorous as they emerge from the rubble, seemingly re-animated from a dormant state. Drawing from the legacy of Arte Povera, Saxon-Hill embraces common materials that reveal their age and patina, her works are tactile in their mix of finery and detritus. The installation is a departure from her past work,

trading in a sense of delicacy in favor of a rough-hewn tenuousness and wry sense of humor.

In the center of the room is a soapbox, where visitors are invited to speak about politics in and around their community. For Saxon-Hill, "This is an attempt to step beyond the static exhibition and inspire a meeting place for communities to come together safely and discuss the grotesque nature of today's politics and make plans for political and social change." In this effort, JOAN will be hosting several casual community conversations and readings to be announced over the next weeks.

Blair Saxon-Hill is currently an Oregon Hallie Ford Fellow and an Oregon Arts Commission Fellow. Her work has been written about in art publications including ArtForum and Frieze Magazine. She has exhibited in solo and group shows for the past 15 years on the West Coast, New York, and Japan. In addition to her practice, Blair Saxon-Hill co-owns Monograph Bookworks, an artist owned bookstore in Portland that specializes in art, design, architecture, counterculture, and critical theory from the later half of the 20th century to the present day. In addition to art books and original works, the bookstore specializes in artists' documents and rare exhibition ephemera from the 1960s to the 1980s, primarily in the areas of conceptual, minimal, pop, land art, counterculture, and political movements.



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2016 - January 29, 2017, JOAN, Los Angeles.*



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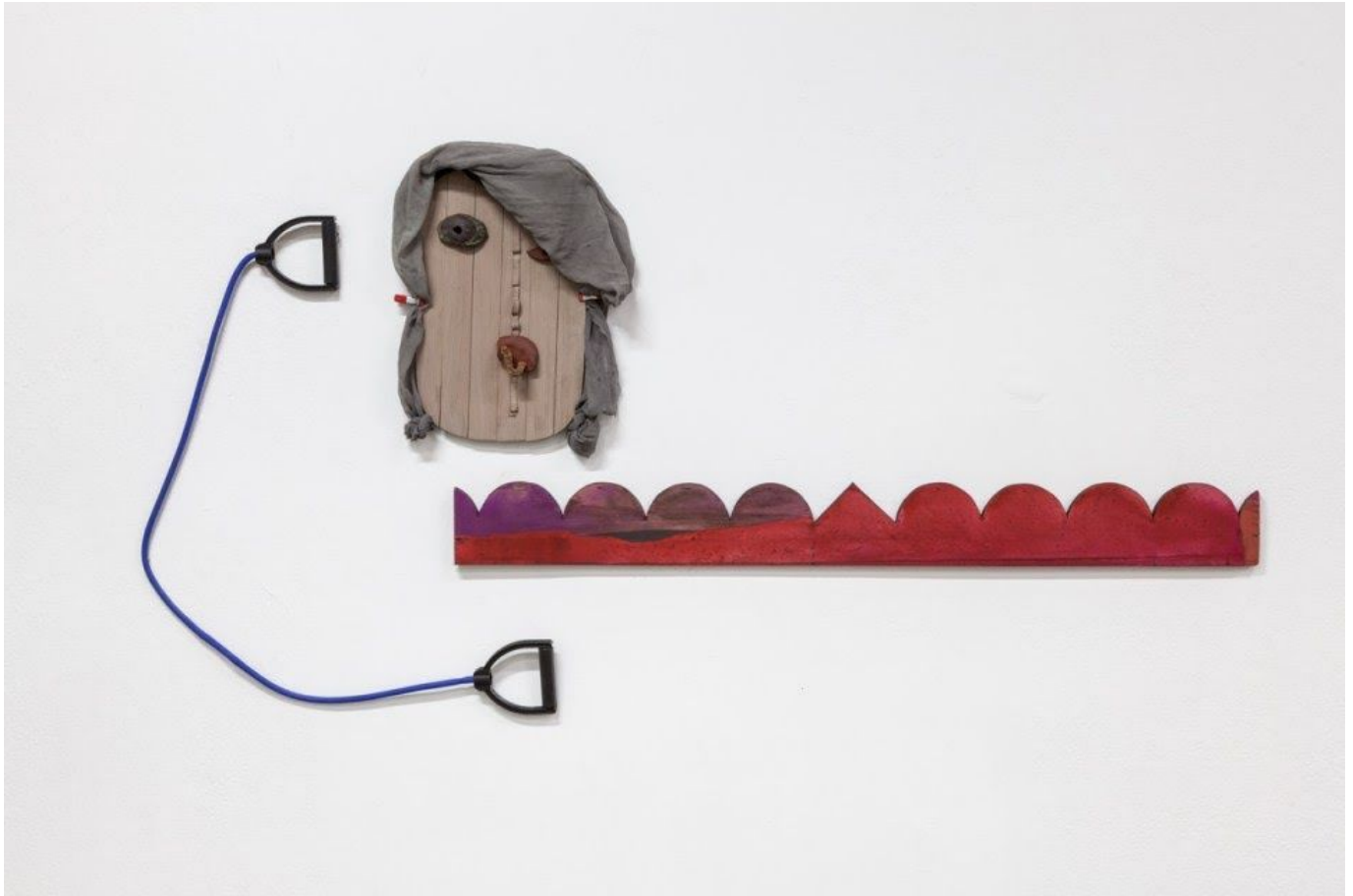
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