

MOTHER GALLERY

Emilie L. Gossiaux

"Memory of a Body"

Curated by Emily Watlington

December 12 through January 30, 2021

Opening reception (w/ covid restrictions) Saturday, December 12, 12 - 6 pm

Mother Gallery is pleased to present "Memory of a Body," a solo exhibition of work by Emilie L. Gossiaux. The show includes an installation of sculpture, painting, and drawings by Gossiaux. "Memory of a Body" opens on December 12, and will run through January 30, 2021. Mother Gallery is located on the ground floor of 1154 North Avenue in Beacon, New York.

Six blind contour drawings are included in "Memory of a Body," Gossiaux creates them using ballpoint pen on newsprint which leaves indentations. Then, she fills in her contours using waxy crayons. Relying on Crayola's evocative color names like Almond and Piggy Pink, having become blind while she was a student at Cooper Union, Gossiaux either draws from memory or observes her subjects by touch. Sometimes, she renames the colors to remember them better. The six drawings in "Memory of a Body" depict her guide dog London, a yellow Labrador retriever. Some are mundane (Arm, Tail, Butthole, 2019), some are fantastical (London and the Goddess, 2019), and all are ripe with Gossiaux's signature: a silly sort of sweetness.

Visible through Mother Gallery's window are two sculptures of London that are monumental in size. She's standing on her hind legs with her arms outstretched, ready to rest her paws in yours and sway side to side for a dance. That's one way London shows affection. Emilie remarked to me that the process of making those papier-mâché sculptures felt a lot like petting her pooch: rubbing a mushy, wet paper pulp onto the dog's Styrofoam body. She made them while awaiting London's biopsy results, and wanted to memorialize their good times together (thankfully, the news was good).

Behind the larger-than-life Londons sits a big blue wedge titled Cerulean: Big Sur, Summer 2010 (Blue Wedge). Reconstructed from the artist's memory of visiting Big Sur, a California tidal pool, the memory-foam lined piece creates the simultaneous sensations of sinking and floating that characterize swimming in water. And, its triangle shape evokes the invisible, sloping geometry that lies beneath the ocean's surface known as the continental shelf. Walking alongside the wedge recreates the sensation of walking deeper into the water. The work both reflects the artist's memory of a good time, and provides a place of rest within the gallery: viewers are invited to sit on the memory-foam-topped wedge. And above the wedge hangs a large circle painted different shades of a fiery orange titled Atomic Tangerine: Looking at the Sun With Your

Eyes Closed (2018).

Throughout the gallery are several life-size ceramic sculptures of body parts: a foot, an ankle. Each are inscribed with tattoos belonging either to herself, or to one of her family members. They're filled with black expanding foam that seeps through the incisions, reminding that tattoos as a form of self-expression are kind of like your insides coming out for others to see. The series is titled "Outerspace" after the name of the sparkly black color Gossiaux chose for the foam; "Atomic Tangerine" and "Cerulean" are Crayola names, too. While these works were made from memory, "Finger Through Palm"—a papier-mâché sculpture of two hands—depicts a practice for inducing lucid dreaming. If you practice imagining piercing the palm of your hand with your finger while touching one to the other, some say that you'll start to be able to control your dreams. Gossiaux is a lucid dreamer, which I was not surprised to learn, since her artwork so richly captures her vivid memories.

Emilie Gossiaux (b. 1989, New Orleans, LA) is an interdisciplinary artist from New Orleans, Louisiana, currently based in New York City. Her work explores the phenomenology of dreams, memories, and multisensory experiences. Since losing her vision in 2010, Gossiaux relies solely on her sense of touch and proprioception, demonstrating a profound sensitivity of texture, space, and material. She is the recipient of the Wynn Newhouse award, the Winter Workspace Residency at Wavehill in the Bronx, and the John F. Kennedy Center's VSA Prize for Excellence. Gossiaux earned her BFA from the Cooper Union School of Art and her MFA in sculpture from Yale University. She has had a solo exhibition at False Flag Gallery in Long Island City. Most recently, her work was shown at the SculptureCenter 2020 "In Practice" open call, Total Disbelief. Gossiaux will participate in The Shed's *Open Call* commission program in the summer of 2021.