

List of Works

***The Meaning of Life* by Hannah Black**

February 11 to April 10, 2022

Hannah Black, *The Meaning of Life*, 2022. Two channel installation, mixed media (cut plywood, three-tiered display shelf, blank white t-shirts, Acrylic on canvas, Polyester flag with projection, LED scrolling sign).

MAIN GALLERY

The Meaning of Life by Hannah Black

Hannah Black's installation at the AGYU is a series of connected videos and objects related to looting. It is commissioned by the AGYU and curated by Jenifer Pappararo. It is Hannah Black's first solo exhibition in Canada.

The main video (15 minutes)

The cut plywood (16 x 9')

The second video (11 Minutes)

LED sign (12.5 x 6.5"); scrolling the word POLITICS.

Flag (Denier nylon, still image projection) 70 x 45"

Display (Three-tiered veneer display stand, cotton t-shirts various sizes (4 x 5 x 4')

Paintings, (Acrylic and spray paint on canvas)

Vitrines (lined with plywood). The 3 vitrines in the colonnade are lined with plywood.

BACK GALLERY

Also on view are a selection of video work by Hannah Black that uses the interview as a basic format and formal process.

east wall

Ramey Raymond, 2019

Single-channel HD video

11:32 minutes

Raymond Ramey, 2019

Single-channel HD video

7:54 minutes

west wall

Aeter (Jack), 2018

Single-channel HD video

4:33 minutes

Aeter (Sam), 2018

Single-channel HD video

3:12 minutes

Biography

Hannah Black works across mediums from video to performance most recently exhibiting *Wheel of Fortune* at gtaExhibitions, Zurich, Switzerland (2021); *Beginning, End, None* at ORG Project (2020); and *Dede, Eberhard, Phantom* at Kunstverein Braunschweig Germany (2019). She has exhibited widely, presenting work at Performance Space, New York (2019); Eden Eden, Berlin (2018); Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva (2018); Chisenhale Gallery, London (2017); mumok, Vienna (2017); and New Museum, New York (2016). She has published widely, including in *Artforum*, *Texte zur Kunst*, *Tank*, *Harpers*, *4 Columns* and *The New Inquiry*. She is the author of *Life* (2017), which she co-wrote with performance artist Juliana Huxtable, and *Dark Pool Party* (2015), an auto-fictional collection of poems and texts. In 2022, Capricious Publishing released her novella, *Tuesday or September or the End*. She is represented by Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin, and Arcadia Missa, London.

Press Release

Hannah Black's exhibition *The Meaning of Life* presents a new body of work centered around looting.

The exhibition revolves around a video based on long interviews with three young women present when a protest tipped over into looting, an ecstatic collective moment. "This is the meaning of life," one performer concludes. Black understands looting to be a direct abolition of the commodity form, a temporary suspension of the domination of capital. She is interested in how commerce dominates the city landscape and forms a kind of second nature to which looting reacts.

However, the works in the show are contorted around the law: the video images of the performers are blurred out and specific names and places are cut to avoid police surveillance, and logos are missing from sculptural works. The law is a formal device shaping the artworks, like an Oulipan aesthetic constraint.

Another video, positioned secondarily behind the first, contrasts the erotics of rupture with attempts to give moments of uprising a more stable political meaning. This consists of an interview with two political organizers on attempts to fuse the intensity of riot with the measured language of policy. The first video attempts to capture the sensory and emotional clarity of looting, and is disfigured in the attempt. In the second, faces remain legible, but the problem of history does not necessarily do the same.

The two videos in the exhibition reflect Black's ongoing practice of using an intuitive, fragmentary writing/editing strategy to highlight the improvised poetry of conversation. The relation between the two videos, along with the objects displayed alongside them, attempts to express the gap between the complex mediations of politics, the law, and the chaotic image of immediate abolition given by looting. In the exhibition as in life, sometimes these two registers miss each other entirely and sometimes they converge, though always overshadowed by capital.

Working outwards from ecstatic recollections of shattered storefront windows, the exhibition reflects on the stubborn resilience of the commodity form (i.e. the structure of domination and exploitation in which we all differently live) and, equally, of resistance to it.

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Also on view at the AGYU is a selection of Black's video work that uses the interview as a basic format and formal process. *The Meaning of Life* is commissioned by the AGYU and marks Hannah Black's first solo exhibition in Canada. It is curated by Jenifer Pappararo, AGYU's Director/Curator.