

SITUATIONS

FELIX BEAUDRY
THE GLOB MOTHER

OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY, JAN 13, 6-8 PM
EXHIBITION DATES: JAN 13 - FEB 19, 2023

SITUATIONS presents Felix Beaudry's second solo exhibition with the gallery, titled "The Glob Mother." The exhibition title references the 1953 children's book, *The Glob*—where a cute, mucky creature presents the Darwinian stages of evolution. Beaudry's show is composed of machine-knit figurative works, each of which demonstrate different ways of making. Spliced cyborgian figures emerge through codified concepts of space, made possible using programmable knitting machines. The gap between Beaudry's initial visual projection, and what is actually born from the machine, beautifully mirrors transition as a space of desire.

At Beaudry's studio in Kingston, NY, he programs patterns and imagery into a Stoll machine. His process involves converting an abstract idea of dimensional form into a flat image, that image is then processed through the computer to knit stitches on the machine. The resulting fabric expands and contracts in areas to create a dimensional skin, which is either stuffed or left loose.

Felix Beaudry's titular work, *The Glob Mother* is entangled with *Lay Z Boy* on a vintage couch covered in a decorative woven pattern. This tableau is born from the idea of putting on different skins, how we deal with the mess of the body. The two figures recline and take up space, which can be horrific and awkwardly monstrous. Beaudry plays on a reference to La-Z-Boy recliners. *Lay Z Boy* wears a sweater of skin, and skin pants, socks and gloves. In creating these skin garments, the artist imagines a world where we can take our skin on and off.

The window sill has a small plinth with a two-faced machine-knit bust, titled *Tadpole*. On the wall above, a face is pinned to the wall, excess fabric like the skin from the neck and back of the scalp is stretched and flayed to mimic a picture plane. Named for his father, *Peter Beaudry*, the fabric on the face extends like skin not fully attached to form – a shroud, a flap.

Flying Lessons, a tapestry hanging on the wall, illustrates four figures on top of a rocky mountain. The central figure is a light peachy hue, her body is rippled and her face somber. She is surrounded by three magenta figures, one of which is held over her head, about to be hurled off a cliff. The other two figures flank her to watch. Beaudry likens this figure to the final boss in a video game, where the hero faces an exaggerated tangle of their weaknesses and fears, something grand to end the game, a confrontation of the shadow-self.

Tapestry references the medieval, presents allegory, and asks to be read like a story or a morality tale. Yet, Beaudry's *The Glob Mother* eliminates the virtues attached to finding the authentic self and allows for multiplicity. He generates using fantasy, and from desire.

FELIX BEAUDRY (b. 1996 Berkeley, CA; lives and works in Kingston, NY) Beaudry graduated with a BFA from RISD in 2018. Beaudry has held solo exhibitions at SITUATIONS, NYC and group exhibitions include The Bunker, West Palm Beach, FL; RISD Museum, Providence; New Discretions, Catskill, NY; ltd, LA; and Tatjana Pieters; Ghent, Belgium.

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Felix Beaudry: *The Glob Mother*
by Jillian McManemin

Felix Beaudry's titular work, *The Glob Mother*, is a tableau. A 70's looking couch with a decorative woven pattern becomes home for machine-knit busts, reliefs, a reclining figure, and a series of heads in various states of undone. Some of the faces are pinned to the wall, excess fabric like the skin from the neck and back of the scalp is stretched and flayed to mimic a picture plane. Other heads have fabric hanging from them like skin not fully attached to form – a shroud, a flap. Unfinished heads become ideas, aborted figures, identities to take on and off. A reclining figure sits on the couch amongst his brethren. We sit next to this figure, rearrange the heads, and find ourselves on the couch amongst them. *The Glob Mother* becomes a space to arrange and get comfy. What mother made is subject to chance, to change, the possibility of reordering, of violation, play, and agency.

This tableau and exhibition title reference the 1953 children's book, *The Glob*—where a cute, mucky creature presents the Darwinian stages of evolution. The Glob's message is sticky. Politics that surround the body and our biological origin story, are based in myth with the aim to control. Becoming globby is a way out, becoming globby is about agency. *The Glob* weaves myth with the real, blending both forces. The character transforms himself based on curiosity, starting from an amorphous creature, The Glob changes because he yearns to interact with the world—and this speaks to the trans experience.

How can we have creative control over our bodies? What will the interaction with others be like? To slip on and off the sweaters of various skins. Could skin be a shared dominion? And, what of our role as queer and trans makers? Beaudry messes with the annoyingly rigid lines, creating from a space of desire rather than accepting a given role. He embraces the stickiness and his process beautifully mirrors transition as a space of desire.

We cannot read sculpture like we read tapestry. There is touch. Touch is the origin story of sculpture. Sculpture exists in the world, is made from the world, it cannot be divorced from its time. Textiles are particularly difficult to conserve, they touch the body when they are worn. This is expanded on, as *The Glob Mother* engages touch in a direct way. Via touch, Beaudry puts the idea of form into a flat image, and then that pattern is given volume. There is contact with the body in the real world, then an abstract concept of it which is a space of creativity, and then another body is born, fused with yearning and made possible by technology—a spliced cyborgian figure that the artist has to contend with, the gap between a visual projection and what is actually born from the machine.

Beaudry's works engage both the medieval and the brutality of fast fashion, textiles created and discarded. Tapestry presents allegory, and asks to be read like a story or morality tale. Yet, *The Glob Mother* does away with the virtues attached to finding the authentic self and allows for multiplicity. We are to be built upon. We generate from fantasy, from desire that's been gently pushed from the machine, the bound flesh made through rows of needles, sutures, and pattern, the colors that slip out holding each other, the skin graphs of sculpture.