

## ***THIS AMERICAN LIFE***

**LIZZIE FITCH, CALVIN MARCUS, BORNA SAMMAK, MARTINE SYMS,  
RYAN TRECARTIN, ROBIN F. WILLIAMS, AND DENA YAGO**

**September 8 - October 28, 2023**

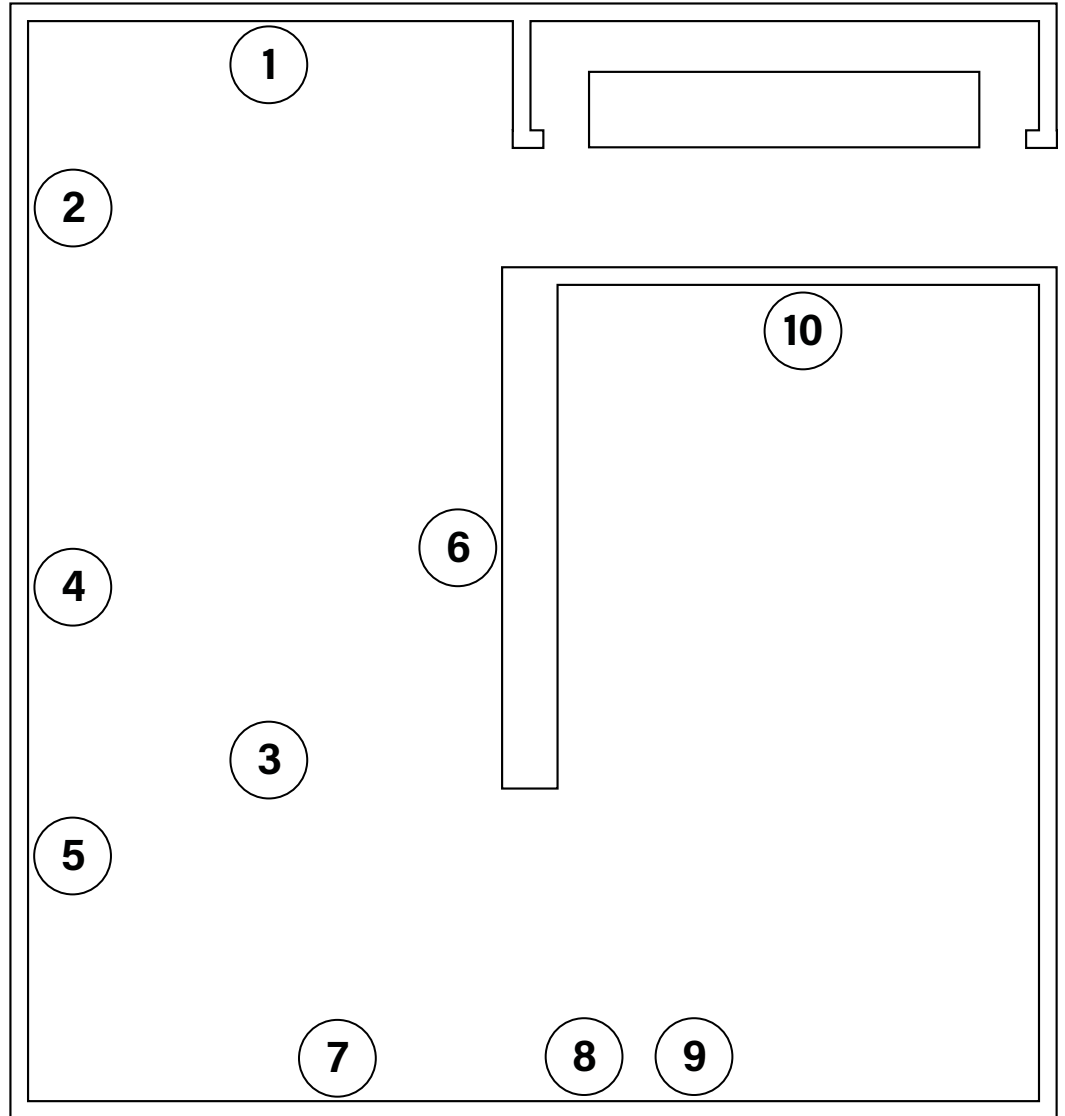
*This American Life* is an exhibition about stories, how they are conjured, how they are communicated, and how they relate to lived experience. These accounts are freighted in race, in gender, and in sexuality. It is also about the relationship between contemporary art and its reframing of the imagery of American culture. While negotiating the skewed protocols of media, the loops and networks of distribution, this constellation of artworks insist upon the intimacy and proliferation of artistic experimentation.

The artworks on view can be seen through the filter of language and media. Lizzie Fitch and Ryan Trecartin's work deftly reflect emerging cultural shifts that represent changes in the perception of collective value systems – forming new understandings and revealing new meanings. Robin F. Williams refigures the form to build a new way of picturing, generously intervening into pop culture and cultivating multilayered narratives that challenge the viewer. Martine Syms offers a visual memoir of contemporary American life, exploring the power of the gesture, and embedded assumptions concerning gender and racial inequities.

Most of the imagery concerns America, its tragicomic stories of its heroes and heroines mingled with the material of daily life. Tension is the central force surrounding these works, enhancing the mystery of the given story, such as the haunted urban landscapes and scenes of Dena Yago, or the compressed metaphors and dense patterns present in the works of Borna Sammak. In other cases, the works bring to light the absurd realities of contemporary life, as in the work of Calvin Marcus, who places the viewer at the heart of the humor.

The artists in *This American Life* intervene, dissecting narratives and reassembling them to offer a new perspective. In the process, fresh truths are revealed and a deeper insight into our shared American experience emerges.

## EXHIBITION CHECKLIST



**[1] Robin F. Williams**  
*Stepford Carrie*, 2023  
Pastel and colored pencil  
on paper  
39 x 45 inches  
(99.1 x 114.3 cm)

**[2] Ryan Trecartin**  
*Please Knock Before Going  
Outside (Flood Season)*, 2023  
Micro-relief prints, area  
rugs, architectural roofing  
shingles, stanchions, rope,  
roofing screws, metallic  
finishing paint, black walnut,  
cherry wood, white elm, and  
plywood. Additional credits:  
Adam Trecartin: Wood milling,  
carpentry, and print housing  
construction; Murphy Maxwell:  
*Whether Line* prop and font  
consultant  
91 x 72 x 10 ½ inches  
(231.1 x 182.9 x 26.7 cm)

**[3] Lizzie Fitch /  
Ryan Trecartin**  
*Porchright*, 2023  
Repurposed hand-woven  
gaming chair prototype, metal  
garden bugs from the summer  
aisle at Target (c. 2015), wooden  
laundry sign, decorative  
wooden flower signs, garden,  
porch, and pool propaganda  
from Target circa (c. 2015), metal  
garden candle holders and  
pottery from Ross (c. 2015) [...] "Relax" throw pillow from Target  
(c. 2015), metal rods, wood rods,  
fashion tape from Micheals  
(c. 2015), knife & kitchen set  
from Target (c. 2015), and used  
cigarettes from the sidewalk.  
Additional credits: Rhett LaRue:  
Hand-woven gaming chair  
prototype  
71 x 149 x 60 inches  
(180.3 x 378.5 x 152.4 cm)

**[4] Calvin Marcus**  
*Untitled*, 2022  
Watercolor and pencil on paper  
25 ¾ x 33 ½ inches, framed  
(65.4 x 85.1 cm, framed)

**[5] Dena Yago**  
*Bets Hedged*, 2023  
Acrylic and inkjet on canvas  
54 x 80 inches  
(137.2 x 203.2 cm)

**[6] Borna Sammak**  
*If You Win Things Might Get  
Worse*, 2023  
Heat applied t-shirt graphics  
and vinyl on canvas  
60 x 50 inches  
(152.4 x 127 cm)

**[7] Dena Yago**  
*Capacity*, 2023  
Acrylic and inkjet on canvas  
54 x 100 x 1 ½ inches  
(137.2 x 254 x 3.8 cm)

**[8] Martine Syms**  
*Oh, that was such a fun day!*, 2021  
Archival pigment print  
33 x 24 ¾ x 1 ½ inches, framed  
(84.14 x 62.87 x 3.81 cm, framed)  
Edition 1/1 + 1 AP

**[9] Martine Syms**  
*I miss the kids*, 2021  
Archival pigment print  
24 ¾ x 33 x 1 ½ inches, framed  
(62.9 x 84.1 x 3.8 cm, framed)  
Edition 1/1 + 1 AP

**[10] Martine Syms**  
*SHE MAD: Bitch Zone*, 2020  
Digital video (color, sound)  
RT: 10:50, no loop  
Edition 1/5 + 1 AP