

Press Release



Liza Jo Eilers, Caroline Douville & Maxwell Volkman

Hypnos

Espace Maurice

February 24th - March 16th, 2024

“I don't like Paradise
as they probably don't have obsessions there.[...]”

When I raise a toast to madness,
I toast myself as well.

There are nights that don't
ever happen.”
Alda Merini tr. Douglas Basford, *Aphorisms* (2007)

Dear friends,

It is a real treat to invite you **Saturday, February 24th, from 6 to 9 pm** to the opening of *Hypnos*, a group exhibition of new works by Montreal based artists: Caroline Douville, and Chicago based: Liza Jo Eilers and Maxwell Volkman, with an accompanying text by performance artist, writer and psychoanalyst: Jeanne Randolph.

I suppose it all boils down to an eye-flicker, a micro-movement.

Tales of Hypnos vary, but according to the *Deipnosophistae*, the god put his beloved to sleep with eyes wide open to better enjoy gazing without interruption. I too, have the propensity to get fixated on my own obsessions, entire ideas of persons replay endlessly in my mind. I don't need to tell you, certain ways of looking are prohibited nowadays.

At the time of the study patient TS-H worked at an office: 43/right handed/normal as can be. They found her to be uniquely predisposed to influence. I suppose she responded to an ad, or else how would they have found her, and looked straight into her eyeballs while she sat there, swallowing a little less than usual? An eye flicker, a tremor, a proof of some sort of altered consciousness. It's no joke, it's scientifically confirmed.

It is a shameful feeling to confess to this kind of thing –the suggestibility yes, but mostly the pleasure found in it. A certain weakness of the mind, a self lacerating indulgence. The hypnotized subject is entranced precisely because of the impossibility of revealing what comes forth.

Personally, I am not sure what's to be found in a gaze. I have stared into more than a few pairs of dishonest eyes and been astonished as to how little they reveal. But, of course, the thing about mind control is that it doesn't limit itself to a pair of pupils, dilated or not.

Press Release

The idea I was trying to get at, started as a response to Hertzog's *Heart of Glass* - something about an entire village enslaved to a type of glass turned red from a secret alchemical process. It is the red they are enamored with, a red that is only possible by the transformations of particles of gold. Hertzog famously hypnotized all the actors in the film, feeding them lines one by one, scene by scene.

Sporadically a shepherd exclaims predictions for the impending industrialization of the town and its consequences. This is a film about despair, anomie, madness. Throw the glass in the river, turn the waters red like blood! Dance with the dead! Undress! Let out the bestial scream. The town unravels and as it does, its primal instincts come first, decency second. The crisis only occurs once the red is rare, once precarity hits, once the object of desire is threatening to leave.

I keep thinking it's too far a leap from the paintings. But the image persists. What I thought was a question of hypnosis, might have always been a question of obsession. Seems to me that one can easily find its way into the other, at least metaphorically.

LIZA JO EILERS (b. 1993 St. Paul, MN) lives and works in Chicago, IL. Eilers obtained a MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2020 and a BA in Industrial Design from the University of Notre Dame in 2015. Eilers recent solo and two person exhibitions include, *The Great American Songbook*, Grove, London, UK; *Don't blow on the soup* at Material Room, Richmond, VA; *GLORY'S* with Alessandra Norman at Yew Nork, Chicago, IL; *The Care and Keeping of You* at SULK CHICAGO, Chicago, IL; and *SLUDGE* at Rainbo Club presented by M. LeBlanc, Chicago, IL. Her work has been shown in group exhibitions at, de boer, Los Angeles, CA; Tchotchke Gallery, Brooklyn, NY; Julius Caesar, Chicago, IL; The Latent Space, Chicago, IL; Night Club Gallery, Minneapolis, MN; Weatherproof, Chicago, IL; Racecar Factory, Indianapolis, IN; SULK CHICAGO, Chicago, IL.

CAROLINE DOUVILLE is an artist and curator based in Montréal. She holds a BFA from Concordia University and is currently completing a certificate in museology at Université du Québec à Montréal. From a second-generation Haitian diaspora background, she researches afro- descendant culture and its influence on local and global popular culture. She attempts to demystify the cognitive processes by which members of the diaspora interrogate their distant identity and how they connect it to their locality. More specifically, Douville is interested in how the internet can act as a tool to facilitate this research by providing access to a vast range of content. Through a focus on painting and installation, her work presents a tension between fiction and reality by interrogating how technology influences our visual perception in everyday life. Douville has exhibited in Canada and abroad, including at the Clark Centre and Tap Art Space in Montréal, Afternoon projects in Vancouver, New Image Art and Good Mother Gallery in Los Angeles.

MAXWELL VOLKMAN (b. 1997 in Tacoma, WA) lives and works in Chicago. Volkman received his BFA in Studio Art from Central Washington University in 2019 and his MFA in Painting & Drawing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2021. Recent solo-exhibitions of Volkman's work include 'MAXWELL VOLKMAN IN THE HOLE' (2022) at Weatherproof in Chicago and 'Sucker' (2022) with M. LeBlanc at Rainbo Club in Chicago. His work has been included in select group exhibitions including 'Offices

Press Release

and Honky Tonks' (2023) at Night Club Gallery in St. Paul, MN, 'Threads' (2022) at the Bridgeport Art Center in Chicago, 'Shot at Love' (2022) at Screw Gallery in Leeds, UK, 'Witchblades' (2021) at Patient Info in Chicago, and 'Goodbye Horses' (2021) at The Research House of Asian Art in Chicago. Volkman recently hosted a one night installation curated by LVL3 at Soho House in Chicago titled 'A Nightmare' (2023). Volkman's self-published zine, 'Silent Screams' (2022), was featured on Rapture Books and in store at Satellite Store in London, UK. His work will also be featured as a set decoration for the upcoming AppleTV+ show, 'Durango 60623' inspired by the sci-fi novel, 'Dark Matter' (2023).

JEANNE RANDOLPH is an independent intellectual whose writings interpret North American culture psychoanalytically and philosophically. Her disdain for advertising and consumerism is dramatically depicted in her most recent book, *My Claustrophobic Happiness*.

Hypnos will be on view until March 16th, 2024. The gallery is open from Wednesday to Saturday from noon to 5 pm., as well as by appointment. Please get in touch if you would like to view the worklist or schedule a virtual walk through.

Maurice is located at 916 Ontario Est, apartment 320. Please ring the doorbell upon arrival or text 438-409-3112 if the door is locked.