



## Group Show: Marman and Borins

March 16 – April 13, 2024

1. Exhibition View
2. Untitled (Munich), 2010, Painted MDF, clay, 6.5 x 8.5 x 3.25", Unique edition of 5
3. Untitled (Munich), 2010, Painted MDF, clay, 6.5 x 8.5 x 3.25", Unique edition of 5
4. Untitled (Munich), 2010, Painted MDF, clay, 6.5 x 8.5 x 3.25", Unique edition of 5
5. Mini Cave, 2010, Clay, sand, paint, MDF, 4.5 x 8.5 x 4", Edition 4 of 5 + 1 AP
6. Mini Cave, 2010, Clay, sand, paint, MDF, 4.5 x 8.5 x 4", Edition 4 of 5 + 1 AP
7. Dancing Column, 2017, 3d printed rubber filament sleeve, kinetic substructure, motor, audio interactive circuit, microphone, lacquer coated MDF, 11 x 11 x 30"
8. Dancing Column, 2017, 3d printed rubber filament sleeve, kinetic substructure, motor, audio interactive circuit, microphone, lacquer coated MDF, 11 x 11 x 30"
9. Dancing Column, 2017, 3d printed rubber filament sleeve, kinetic substructure, motor, audio interactive circuit, microphone, lacquer coated MDF, 11 x 11 x 30"
10. Mini Cave, 2010, Clay, sand, paint, MDF, 4.5 x 8.5 x 4", Edition 4 of 5 + 1 AP; Google 2.0 (small version), 2010, Acrylic, motors, electrons, PC, 12 x 27 x 3.5", Edition of 2 + 2 AP
11. Google 2.0 (small version), 2010, Acrylic, motors, electrons, PC, 12 x 27 x 3.5", Edition of 2 + 2 AP
12. Google 2.0 (small version), 2010, Acrylic, motors, electrons, PC, 12 x 27 x 3.5", Edition of 2 + 2 AP
13. Google 2.0 (small version), 2010, Acrylic, motors, electrons, PC, 12 x 27 x 3.5", Edition of 2 + 2 AP
14. Exhibition View
15. A Glass of Water, 2018, Resin and glass, 3.75 x 3.25 x 3.25"; Espresso 01 (study for Espresso), 2016, Acrylic on archival gesso board, 24 x 24"
16. A Glass of Water, 2018, Resin and glass, 3.75 x 3.25 x 3.25"
17. Espresso 01 (study for Espresso), 2016, Acrylic on archival gesso board, 24 x 24"
18. Input Output 02, 2013, Acrylic on canvas, 36 x 36"; Blue Green Window, 2016, Acrylic on archival gesso board, 24 x 24"; Blue Green Opuntia, 2016, 3d print (sandstone, acrylic plastic), 39 x 17 x 10", Edition 1 of 2 + 1 AP
19. Input Output 02, 2013, Acrylic on canvas, 36 x 36"
20. Blue Green Opuntia, 2016, 3d print (sandstone, acrylic plastic), 39 x 17 x 10", Edition 1 of 2 + 1 AP; Blue Green Window, 2016, Acrylic on archival gesso board, 24 x 24"
21. Blue Green Opuntia, 2016, 3d print (sandstone, acrylic plastic), 39 x 17 x 10", Edition 1 of 2 + 1 AP
22. Blue Green Window, 2016, Acrylic on archival gesso board, 24 x 24"
23. Exhibition View
24. Exhibition View
25. Test Doob, 2004, video (720p), 7:23 minutes
26. Test Doob, 2004, video (720p), 7:23 minutes
27. Test Doob, 2004, video (720p), 7:23 minutes

28. Deep Purple, 2016, Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 48"
29. Deep Purple, 2016, Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 48"; Full Spectrum Shredded, 2017, Acrylic, Archival Paper, 45 x 90 x 3"
30. Full Spectrum Shredded, 2017, Acrylic, Archival Paper, 45 x 90 x 3"
31. Exhibition View
32. Exhibition View
33. Marooned, 2012, Acrylic on canvas, mixed media, 90 x 30"
34. Marooned, 2012, Acrylic on canvas, mixed media, 90 x 30"
35. Sleeping, 2018, Plaster, gesso, paint, mixed media, 4.5 x 7 x 8"
36. Sleeping, 2018, Plaster, gesso, paint, mixed media, 4.5 x 7 x 8"
37. Exhibition View
38. Space Cube, 2023, Acrylic paint, MDF, fibre optic cable, electronics, 18 x 18 x 18"; Perpetual Motion, 2001, Polyester Resin Coated MDF, Plastic, Electronic components, 3D printing, 16 x 22", Edition of 5 + 1 AP
39. Space Cube, 2023, Acrylic paint, MDF, fibre optic cable, electronics, 18 x 18 x 18"
40. Perpetual Motion, 2001, Polyester Resin Coated MDF, Plastic, Electronic components, 3D printing, 16 x 22", Edition of 5 + 1 AP
41. Perpetual Motion, 2001, Polyester Resin Coated MDF, Plastic, Electronic components, 3D printing, 16 x 22", Edition of 5 + 1 AP

**MKG127** is very pleased to present **Group Show: Marman and Borins**. The exhibition is an eclectic arrangement of artworks by duo Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins, surveying pieces from over 20 years of their project-based collaboration.

Solo exhibitions are a construct that feature a singular body of work. Marman and Borins, known for their unorthodox practice, conversely format this exhibition in a manner where singular works, chosen for their points of individual interest, are presented as if the gallery were conducting a 'group show.' The selection of artworks threads the needle of a focused and contrasting tour of the artists' practice. In the exhibition *Group Show*, rarely seen pieces are punctuated with artworks of greater notoriety. Paintings vie with photography, and electronic works challenge sculpture. Faux readymades, experimental video, and conceptual abstraction round out an exhibition in point and counterpoint manner.

In the front room of the gallery the photograph *Momento Monkey* (2007) portrays a collision between the Planet of the Apes and the apes from the film 2001. Nearby, *Dancing Column* is a sound activated black cylinder responsive to movement. Showing poses and contortions reminiscent of the dancing Coke cans of the 1980s, its form also recalls Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel*, a readymade from over a century ago. On the opposite wall a pair of comical googly eyes stares outward. Belying the omnipresence of our mass-surveillance-economy the interactive artwork *Google 2.0* (2010) reverses looking and seeing as it follows the viewer in the gallery. These works are bookended by *Mini Cave and Munich* (2010), wherein another spectre, that of global terrorism, is transmogrified, meme-like, to round out the 'democratization of images' into a Baudrillard-like 'implosion of meaning in the media.' While not claiming a mastering of clairvoyance, Marman and Borins are nonetheless attuned to information age modalities of our time, punctuating the gallery space with images involving the information, misinformation, and disinformation, audiences are bombarded with. Simultaneously forming touchstones of the contemporary age, and their own practice in the process. Reminiscent of Marman and Borins' seminal exhibition *Wha Happened?* (2009), the table has been set for a popular culture in which conflicting images, high or low, are leveled.

In the main gallery another 'apparent' readymade is shown in the form of *A Glass of Water* (2018). The references to upholstery, the flat painting method, and integrated design of *Marooned* (2012) shows both the facture and conceptualism of Marman and Borins' practice. Positioned opposite the work, the painting *Espresso 01 (study for Espresso)* (2016) serves as a counterpoint to the minimalist 'Judd-like' nature of *Marooned*, wherein painting doubles as both cushions and sculpture. *Espresso*, a MacPaint computer mouse scribble is rendered with a brush, in a tempera painting method and anti-ab-ex stance. Both works are examples of the artists' practice whereas conceptualism is applied to abstract art, in form, without words.

Throughout the exhibition juxtaposition is used to create show-forming context, next leading the eye toward *Input Output 02*. A painting about process, *Input Output 2* depicts layers of a paper-scroll in profile, not yet settling into final form. Not present in the exhibition is work *Input Output* (2013) a black-box kinetic sculpture that emits and devours a continuous scroll of white paper into a gridded basket. Here, *Input Output 02* (2013) must vie for legitimacy solely as a painting; while frozen ~~ææ~~ as a schematic, or set of instructions. The Canadian contemporary art movement, plagued by the onus of conceptual-social purpose as justification for the production of art, is thrown into question. So too with surrealism; and it follows that an orphan of a work, the ovoid sculpture *Sleeping* (2018) rests 'Brancusilike' on a white plinth. Unlike *Google 2.0* in the previous room, its eyes remain covered by its sleeping mask.

In a 'Hesse-like' leap to the real, a chromatically pixelated sculpture of a cactus stands adjacent at the opposite wall. *Blue Green Opuntia* (2016) is a 3D printed object that hints at the virtual world of digital skins and a future in which the real and hyper-real are no longer distinguishable. This sentiment is

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doubled with the accompanying painting *Blue Green Window* (2016) further carrying the effects of a culture of simulation. Or, should we say that disruption and creative destruction, the mantras of Silicon Valley prevail in *Full Spectrum Shredded* (2017). *Full Spectrum Shredded* contains emotive movement in its 'all over' the surface work.

Though eschewing the romanticism of paint, it certainly recalls Automatiste strategies in composition, and the laborious hours spent shredding paper. Will the high art claims of hermetic aura remain, or are they shredded too?

The most visible long view is *Viewable* across the length of the gallery, *Deep Purple* (2016) holds its own as both divided, tessellated, singular, and apparition-like. Confronted by its smoky blue, magenta, plaid, and purple spaces, the viewer is challenged to behold an artwork longer than the digital swipe of an image. Previously only once exhibited at *Pleasure Dome* (2004), *Test Doob* is revived to stand in contrast to the absorptive characteristics of *Deep Purple*. Art rocker Conan Romanyk, trained to shred on guitar by his roadie dad, takes us into the first examples of what we would later see as a YouTube and TikTok phenomenon. Not to be outdone by *Space Cube*, *Test Doob* makes its own intergalactic exit. Ultimately, *Group Show: Marman and Borins* shows that MKG127 and the artists themselves are collapsing time, moving across folded space, and punching in the coordinates for their next warp.

### **About the Artists**

Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins have co-authored work since 2000. Marman holds a BA in Philosophy from the University of Western Ontario, and Borins holds a BA in Art History from McGill University. Both artists have also obtained advanced degrees from the Ontario College of Art and Design. In a body of work encompassing installations, paintings, large-format sculpture, and electronic art, Marman and Borins contextualize visual art within everyday life while simultaneously referring to and reassessing twentieth century art history. Their practice carries interpretations of the information age and postulations on its digital implications. Their artwork ruminates on how images are circulated, showing remixes and speculative narratives – to provide commentary on our contemporary mass visual culture.

Solo exhibitions include the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Southern Alberta Art Gallery, Robert McLaughlin Gallery, the Art Gallery of Hamilton, and the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art. Select group exhibitions include *The Power Plant*, the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Bi-City Biennale, and the National Gallery of Canada. Their work is held in several notable public collections, including the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the Art Gallery of Hamilton. Public commissions include *Busy Beaver* at the Schulich School of Business at York University, *The Water Guardians* by Waterfront Toronto, *Dodecadandy* for the City of Toronto and the Toronto Transit Commission, and *Google* for The Martin Prosperity Institute at the University of Toronto.

Current solo exhibitions include *Three Dimensions* at Contemporary Calgary, touring to the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia in fall of 2024. Marman and Borins are selected artists for the Shanghai Jing'an Sculpture Biennale in fall 2024.