

## PRESS RELEASE

**Mary Helena Clark**

*Conveyor*

January 25 - March 23, 2024

Bridget Donahue proudly presents *Conveyor*, a solo exhibition by artist and filmmaker Mary Helena Clark. The exhibition contains a two-channel video, a series of six photographs, and several motorized and amplified sculptures.

The video *Neighboring Animals* is organized around the mouth – as a tool to bite and chew, as an instrument of speech, and as a site of disgust and desire. It incorporates footage of animal dentistry, bite mark analysis, and a reliquary containing the tooth of Mary Magdalene. Projected alongside these images is a text collaging language from psychological studies on disgust, Georges Bataille, and Emily Dickinson.

One trigger for disgust is a rupture of the inside and the outside, what has been termed envelope violation. For instance a bone puncturing the skin. Throughout the exhibition we see objects which subtly dramatize a confusion around such thresholds. *Brooders* is a series of photographs of styrofoam and cardboard incubators: temperature controlled environments for hatching eggs. These unassuming containers appear like human made habitats – rooms, closets, cells – while functioning as something like makeshift wombs.

At the center of the gallery are a pair of steel doors that have been cut apart, emptied, and welded together with a gap between. The interior of each door is amplified with transducers playing audio of spectators at a zoo, turning the metal faces of the doors into simple speakers. Here Clark pairs sound and object in much the same way she does as a filmmaker, by attaching sound to image in order to create another more curious object – a bell that rings with the sound of a swing set, or a racking exposure synced to human breath – what Clark has described as “cinema’s inherent ventriloquism.”

Throughout the gallery are several dead bolts motorized to continuously lock and unlock. They appear animate, crawling their way across the gallery floor, as machines mirroring back human feeling – sympathy, comedy, disgust.

### **Corresponding exhibition in San Francisco**

Mary Helena Clark at Cushion Works

February 10 - March 30, 2024

### **Off-site Film Program**

*Figures Minus Facts: The Films of Mary Helena Clark*

Anthology Film Archive, 32 Second Avenue, NYC 10003

In conjunction with her gallery exhibition, AFA presents two programs — one featuring a selection of her 16mm and digital works, and the other – selected by Clark – pairing three of her films with thematically related works by Michael Snow, Rosemarie Trockel, and Charlotte Prodger.

February 24, 7:30PM: early films (2008-2020) with a tone chime performance organized by Zane Morris

February 25, 7:30PM: recent films (2018-2024) with Michael Snow, Rosemarie Trockel, and Charlotte Prodger

March (date TBD): A Common Sequence (2023) a feature co-directed by Clark with Mike Gibisser

**Mary Helena Clark** (born 1983, USA) lives and works in Queens, New York. Her work has been exhibited and screened nationally and internationally, including presentations at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge; Sundance Film Festival, Park City; Swedish Film Institute, Stockholm; The Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago; Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus; Anthology Film Archives, New York; Yerba Buena Center; San Francisco; National Gallery of Art, Washington DC; and at the New York, London, Rotterdam and Toronto International Film Festivals.