

NADJA**CURATED BY MARIE SEGOLENE**

JUNE 28 - JULY 28, 2024

JOEL DEAN**CASIMIR ERNEST GASSER****ALEGRIA GOBEL****DYLAN WEAVER**

SARA'S is pleased to present *NADJA*, a collaboration between Espace Maurice and SARA'S at Dunkunsthalle, on view from June 28 to July 28, 2024. *NADJA* is a group exhibition presenting new works by Joel Dean, Dylan Weaver, Alegría Gobeil, and Casimir Ernest Gasser, curated by Espace Maurice's founding director Marie Ségolène C Brault. This will be the third project of SARA'S residency at Dunkunsthalle, located at 64 Fulton St. New York, NY.

The works in *NADJA*, ranging from paintings to video, sculpture and performance, are presented through the lens of Andre Breton's infamous novel, while honoring the life of Léona Delcourt, their surreal short lived romance and the multiple intersecting mythologies, themes and narratives present within the book.

"I couldn't tell you how I ended up with a copy of the book but sometime at the end of January, two yellow métro tickets fell right out of its open spine. I was holding the '64 edition: the one with the big hand and the memorable pencil portrait of Nadja on the cover. The version Breton diligently revised¹, omitting all traces of a physical affair. I was holding it up, a few inches from my nose. On the tickets, a tiny note in black pen read something about vacationing, knitting a sweater and looking for a car. They were old but they were not my mother's, nor my aunt's. I traced the tickets back to Paris, sometime around '82, when the RATP launched a publicity campaign called *Ticket Chic, Ticket Choc*, a video with yellow tickets painted on a cow, sticking out of back pockets of jeans, top hats, rings, ties and bras. Get your yellow tickets!

¹ 1929. Breton publishes the first edition of *Nadja*. This first surrealist novel, recognized as one of the great love stories of 20th century French literature, is a detailed account of his short affair with Léona Delcourt, a young woman he met on the streets of Paris. The narrative is weaved through photographs, illustrations and annotations.

Breton's experimental prose is direct, self aware and transparent, he seeks to convey a sense of immediacy in the text while moving from descriptions of their encounters, to critiques of capitalist labor and psychiatry, passionate descriptions of works of art and the streets of Paris in the 1920s.

The 10th of October, 1926. Nadja² tells Breton that before meeting him for dinner she asked the employee in the métro to pick heads or tails. As he punched her ticket he said: tails. He was right. You were wondering if you would see your friend again, he said. You will. That night she predicts Breton will write a novel about her, aware of the fleetingness of their encounters, she hopes that a trace of them withstands time.

The 10th of October 2023. A portrait of an imagined woman, is leaning on the floor of Dylan's mother's basement. While photographing his work, I fall in love with the large hand that frames her face. Dylan insists that she is Scottish, I wonder how one would know. Strange how a pair of eyes in a painting can be so agile at keeping things from us. This thing with the book, it has developed into an obsession. Nose deep in its pages, I am like a truffle pig. First it was the spine of the book, the tickets like piano keys, then the fleeting romance, the fall into madness, Mélusine: the mermaid, fish suspended in still water but actually moving forward, only forward, never backwards. The temporality of desire, the hand big like a flame, burning fast and bright, the tiles that frightened Nadja from entering a bar, these yellow tiles.... The ticket man. The glove. The *convulsive beauty*. Playing *prey to analogies*, as if struck with lucidity. As if all the parts of the cryptogram exist only for you and whomever you deem most trustworthy. And who's to say it doesn't."

- Marie Segolene C. Brault

JOEL DEAN (b. 1986, Atlanta) lives and works in New York. Recent solo exhibitions include Derosia, New York (2024); Bel Ami, Los Angeles (2021); Prairie, Chicago (2019); Cordova, Barcelona (2019); and Interstate Projects, Brooklyn (2018). Selected recent group exhibitions include Simone Subal, New York (2023); Someday, New York (2021); Annex de Odelon, New York (2021); P.P.O.W, New York (2020); Bodega (Derosia), New York (2020); Tatjana Peters, Ghent (2020); Gern en Regalia, New York (2019); MX Gallery, New York (2019, 2018).

CASIMIR ERNEST GASSER (b. 1996, Pike River) was raised in a small farming village in Southern Quebec, where he learned to work with his hands and discovered his material sensibilities. The themes of his work hearken back to this pastoral and secluded upbringing combining the natural world and imagination. Gasser received his BFA from Concordia

² 1926. Nadja, or Léona Camille Ghislain Delcourt (b. 1902), moves to Paris at 18, after a pregnancy. When she meets Breton, she is desperately poor. Delcourt works on the streets and lives out of small hotel rooms, she can barely feed herself. Breton is struck by her. He gives her a drawing to help pay her way. 10 days later, Breton's love wanes as he discovers that the poetics of her mind are in fact symptoms of her mental instability. He realizes that he cannot give her the love and care she needs. Breton fades out of her life. A month later, Delcourt suffers a mental breakdown in the hallways of her hotel. She is sent to a psychiatric institution where she spends the rest of her life. Breton receives a letter from her doctor, but never visits. Delcourt dies in the hospital 14 years later, during the war (possibly, from a tumor aggravated by typhus and starvation).

University. Recent exhibitions include Pumice Raft (Toronto); Espace Maurice (Montreal) and Apartment 13 (Providence, RI.); DarkZone, Madison, NJ (2019); and Gern en Regalia, New York, NY (2019).

DYLAN WEAVER (b. 1976, Youngstown) is a painter who lives and works in Youngstown, Ohio. After receiving some formal training at Youngstown State University, in oil, acrylic and watercolor painting, Weaver has developed a unique style of figurative painting that reflects his solitary life in Youngstown (OH). His work has been shown locally at Art Youngstown Inc, The Trumbull Art Gallery and Greyland Gallery as well as most recently at Espace Maurice (Montreal, Canada). Weaver has been awarded a CSArt Project grant to develop a series on nature and the lunar calendar. Through a surrealist combination of imagery pulled from classical paintings, pop culture and his quotidian, Weaver has grown to shape a visual language that is experimental, brutalist and unsettling. The characters and urban landscapes he depicts are the reflection of a rich dreamscape and a sensitive interiority.

ALEGRÍA GOBEIL works with practices considered self-destructive, unproductive, unlivable, unsurvivable. Their interdisciplinary practice is rooted in performance, having taken the form of altered objects, protocols, writings, documents, in situ actions and their traces. These forms are often the result of citation and narrative detour, engaging in a critique of processes of psychiatrization. Their work always unfolds within the material, corporeal and contextual constraints of their production.

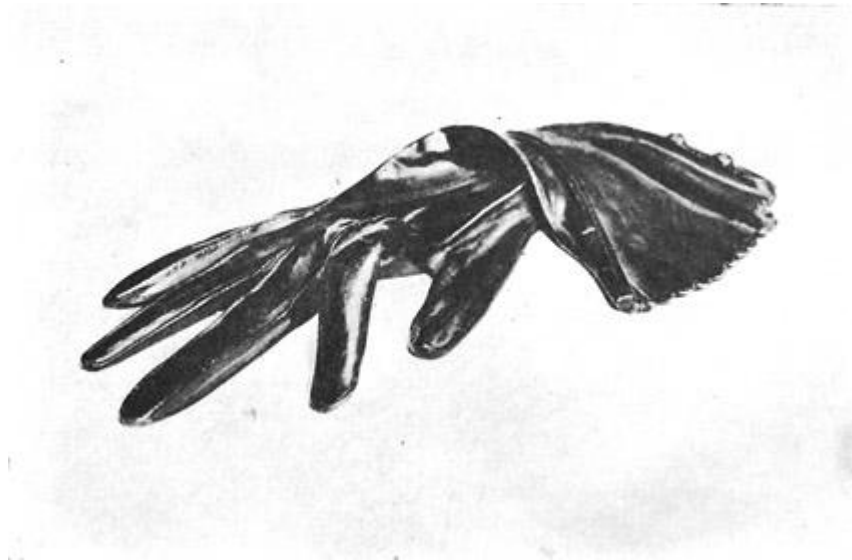
Their performances have been presented by Centre CLARK and GNO (Montreal/Sudbury, CA), Le Lieu (Quebec City, CA), Gruentaler9 (Berlin, DE), Folie/Culture (Quebec City, CA), SKOL (Montreal, CA) and OFFTA (Montreal, CA). Their solo exhibitions have been presented by Le Lieu (Québec City, CA), Espace Maurice (Montréal, CA) and L'Oeil de poisson (Quebec City, CA). A is a 2023-2024 resident at LA SERRE – arts vivants, for their first project as a playwright and director. They hold a Master's degree in Visual and Media Arts from UQAM. A lives and works in Montreal.

MARIE SÉGOLÈNE C. BRAULT (b. 1988) is a performance artist, writer and curator based in Montreal (Canada). She completed her Masters in Performance from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2019. Marie has exhibited work and performed in the US, Canada, and Europe in spaces such as M.Leblanc (Chicago), No Gallery (New York), CUE Arts Foundation (New York), EXPO Chicago (Chicago), Hauser & Wirth (New York), Pangée (Montreal), the Knockdown Center (New York) and more.

In 2022, Marie Ségolène founded Espace Maurice, an apartment-gallery located in Montreal, showcasing works by emerging local and international artists. Espace Maurice took part in

Montreal's contemporary art fair: Plural (2023) and has published four artist books since its inception. Her writing has been commissioned by galleries such as Afternoon Projects

(Vancouver) and TAP Art Space (Montreal). She has curated hybrid projects at Babayaga in Hudson (NY) and Weatherproof - The Hole (Chicago). In the summer of 2024 Marie will be curating a group exhibition in partnership with Sara's at Dunkunthalle (NYC), as well as a group exhibition at Pangée (Montreal). Marie was selected for the 2024 Fonderie Darling Quebec-Acadie Fall Residency in Matapédia (Qc) and Moncton, New Brunswick.



Lise Deharme's glove as featured in Breton's Nadja, p 65.

"Who goes there; Is it you, Nadja? Is it true that the beyond,
that everything beyond is here in this life?
I can't hear you. Who goes there? Is it only me? Is it myself?"
Andre Breton, *Najda* (1929)

"Long live fire, real fire - gaiety - life."
Léona Delcourt, Letter to André n.26, Date Unknown