

## September

### Jennifer Aldred, Eyrie Alzate, Ericka Beckman, Ada Friedman, Jack Salazar, Julia Yerger

Curated by:

#### Otto Bonnen

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The group show brings together artistic positions that each develop dense visual systems and idiosyncratic cosmologies in their own right. The focus is not on the finished piece, but rather on the working process itself—on the act of making, and with it, a play with autonomous aesthetic structures, symbolic forms, and spontaneous decisions made in response to happenstance.

Some of the works are composed of meticulous drawings, collages, or systems of notation that condense into intricate visual fields. They often oscillate between abstraction and figuration, or gesture toward spatiality without fully resolving it. These pieces are traversed by traces of sustained and concentrated engagement with the emerging compositions or material at hand. They function as subjective topographies—consistent yet personal systems that allow complexity without rigid closure, deriving their magic from this openness to the outcome.

Other positions unfold in serial visual programs where stylized figures return as silent protagonists. These figures appear subjected to the aesthetic forces of the abstract systems they inhabit, absorbed into visual worlds governed by their own internal logic—a logic that plays out primarily on a formal level.

What unites all of these practices is a deep trust in the unruly dynamics of one's own working process. They express a deliberate balance between intuition and intention, between allowing the uncontrollable and making precise decisions. In doing so, they offer a modest yet persistent counterpoint to the logic of efficiency that shapes our time. The focus lies on small moments: fragments of intimacy set against the rhetoric of grand gestures. For there is a wondrous strength in the quiet force of the piecemeal.

In Jennifer Aldred's paintings, figures mingle with non-representational traces made using worn-out felt pens and solvent. Stumbling, they tumble through the vague pictorial space or cling to one another in pitiful, consoling poses. As beings without facial features, their eyes hidden behind sunglasses, they unfold their full expressive power through their long ponytails, pointed shoes, and the curvature of their tubular bodies—the few traits that allow them to appear as figures at all. Drawing on the trace-making familiar from restroom graffiti and on the logic of emojis, Jennifer Aldred explores the generation of meaning through reduced and coded forms of communication, such as the drawn or written line.

For Eyrie Alzate, the conventional office printer is one tool among many, yet also a medium situated at the intersection of analog and digital image production. She combines painting, collage, sculpture, and video into works in which the analog and the digital permeate one another. In addition, she experiments with interventions in the printing process itself and subsequently reworks the resulting prints with paint, tape, other materials, and found objects, so that her works oscillate between figuration and abstraction. Not infrequently, she draws on motifs from popular media, such as a fragmented detail from an album cover by the musician Nico.

Ericka Beckman's drawings are sketches for her films, marked by a strong theatrical quality and consistently infused with both analog and digital animation elements. The drawings for her film *Cinderella* (1986) depict the eponymous protagonist in a world resembling a computer game. Male-coded robots, subjected to the rules of a digital cosmos, stagger through the convolutions of their world in search of a real heart. And Cinderella becomes entangled in the net of a matrix spun by these robots—a world she cannot escape, and a game she cannot win.

Ada Friedman's practice follows no linear order—her works emerge instead through a continual process of addition, subtraction, and layering. Drawing, collage, and painting intertwine with diary-like notes and situational observations. Friedman's *Wing and Wheel* paintings are conceived as a twelve-part palimpsest that also functions as a proposal for her play, *Helen Rides VII*. The recurring motif of wheels framed by wings is gleaned from Helen Adam's tale *Riders to Blokula* (1962), which served as the point of departure for the series. Appearing as a lattice-like window into another space, this cyclic pattern acts as a portal between worlds and holds a field of desire.

Jack Salazar's dense compositions unfold across the pages of his notebook—on the subway, in the park, or at home, yet always in an intimate mode of withdrawal. He begins with small moments that set the course for the composition. In this project of quite literally finding a mode of concentration, he almost mediumistically envisions the next steps of the drawing, arising from earlier decisions as if already inscribed on the page. At times, however, he must rein in this flow and bring it back under control. The result are intricate webs that waver between graphic frontality and suggested depth.

The two works by Julia Yerger mark a transitional point in her artistic practice. They stand at the intersection between her digital paintings and the attempt to translate them into physical reliefs. Their starting point is a multitude of small drawings created in her studio. On these snippets, Yerger works, among other things, with repetition and variation – a process that draws on the logic of animation. From the assembling of these fragments emerge compositions that seem to expand without restraint, producing images of explosive growth. Between fragment and condensation, works take shape in which abstraction and the suggestion of figuration interlock, forming a cartography of a process-driven studio practice.

- Otto Bonnen