

dropping, dropping

Michael Assiff
Lothar Baumgarten
Sophie Friedman-Pappas

Rumpelstiltskin is delighted to present *dropping, dropping*, an exhibition featuring three cast concrete wall works by Michael Assiff, an early installation by the late Lothar Baumgarten, and an animation with an accompanying drawing by Sophie Friedman-Pappas.

Various species of weeds and invasives common to New York populate Assiff's low-relief sculptures. Their leaves and flowers intermingle with ants, parasitoid wasps and trash. The panels, cast in home-made concrete and ready-mix, are decorated with traffic marking paint, highlighting the interplay between ecology and industrial infrastructure.

Lothar Baumgarten's *Moskitos* consists of small loaves of yeast-leavened bread stuck with pigeon feathers—both examples of items brought to the Americas by European colonists. Baumgarten first conceived the installation in 1969 at the age of twenty-five while studying in Düsseldorf with Joseph Beuys, nearly a decade before he lived with the Yanomami in the frontier between Brazil and Venezuela on six occasions for months at a time. A prescient and foundational artwork to his later oeuvre, *Moskitos* anticipated Baumgarten's battles with malaria and his lifelong interest in indigenous societies and the devastating effects of colonization.

Sophie Friedman-Pappas's *Short-Lived Relief* (2025) features a DSLR wheel stop-motion animation set in the former boardroom of the old Sinclair Oil Building—now a luxury apartment and photo shoot location in New York's Financial District. The video follows an anonymous G-Man (government man) on probation as he fixates on documents from disgraced FBI agents of the past, including an erotic story written in 1998 by American turncoat Robert Hanssen depicting his wife Bonnie as she struggles with a window shade.¹ The aroused agent masturbates out of a window onto an unsuspecting passerby. Imagining a bird, the soiled pedestrian thinks it's good luck.

¹ McCullagh, D. (2001, August). *Politech: FC: Robert Hanssen: FBI Turncoat and Alt.sex.stories author*. <https://seclists.org/politech/2001/Aug/17>