

NOW THAT WE KNOW EACH OTHER

BETH COLLAR / MARYAM JAFRI / JESSIE MOTT & STEVE REINKE / KAARE RUUD
CURATED BY SNAILS CO-FOUNDERS ANNA CLAWSON & NICOLE WARD

14.11.-23.11.2025 / OPENING: FRIDAY 14.11.2025 / 18.00-21.00

MONDAY - FRIDAY / BY APPOINTMENT

SATURDAY - SUNDAY / 13.00-17.00

Zooming in on the microcosm of the universe to grasp the macro is divination's creed. Last week, we were asked if we were fools for carrying on, considering the many sensible peers who left and found stable careers...ah sure, there are worse things to be called. So let's hear it for the fools!...for the dreamers, still here, still digging in the dark.

In *Now That We Know Each Other*, an uprooted sock, a four-times-daily pill box, and an annotated liver gatecrash a birthday party. It's late or early, depending on your luck, and as the sun's pink edges spill out, maybe we'll finally see who we've been confessing to. The exhibition at Snails continues our attempt to make sense of the mess, bringing together artists who scour the remnants of our civilization. We've gathered them for what we believe lies at the core of their work, an empathetic focus on materials.

Still, we weren't going to quieten the party just to let the works sit comfortably together. If anything else was going to find its way into the same room as Jessie Mott and Steve Reinke's video, it would have to wedge itself in. Their work assembles a cast of mythological animal-creatures busying themselves with melancholic desires and astrological doom at a birthday party. The bass is staying on, and the metal vents of the project space are shaking. The noise is real, artists aren't making in silence. Excavating, interpreting, and animating takes time, patience, and a lot of work.

Beth Collar's sculpture is delicate, and it hasn't been relaxing to have it in our possession. We have to wear cotton gloves and be well-behaved in its presence. Seeing the pencil smudges up close now, we can trace its previous life, its direct contact with skin. Our job is to look. The immediacy of drawing can cause psychic slips, a process that starts in the knowable can quickly drift outside of any source's remit. Beth's work draws on *haruspicy*, the ancient Roman practice of divination that sought to determine the will of the gods in animal entrails. Giving attention to the leftovers and not looking away.

In this transitional time, we linger in the haze between the object and its memory. When locked together in a kind of holding pattern, only the most empathetic of observers can ground what is stored. Once attuned, we can truly see the absurdity of the everyday. For us, the treasure is finding artists who unlock this for others. And so here we are, in a dimly lit corner with Kaare Ruud's "floordrobe" sculpture. A single hovering sock, lodged directly onto the building's metal infrastructure, its roots spurting downwards.

Our *ludditesque* impulse is to reject the tech industry's role in hollowing out the fullness of material culture. Thankfully, Maryam Jafri takes a sharply witty approach to language, technology, and the role of lithium carbonate in mental health. Her hand-sized work offers us a noncommittal "Fine" to be swallowed on a Tuesday afternoon. The word's ambiguity is challenged by the computer's Italian origins, where *fine* translates to "end". Even in its mass-produced form, Maryam focuses on the individual, a single moment from one solitary weekday.

Giving attention to the everyday, and letting even the smallest things grow in your mind, can be difficult to balance, as the many anxious confessions of Jessie Mott's animal-creatures seem to testify. In a collective setting, the shared studio becomes a haven for keeping yourself balanced. Now that we know each other, we can share in the absurdity of the fool's errand...because really, we can't imagine doing anything else.

*On our walk to buy some drab yet celebratory grey balloons, we passed a shop blaring "*99 Red Balloons*" (the anti-war protest song that tells of 99 red balloons mistaken for a military threat, leading to nuclear war).

- Anna Clawson & Nicole Ward

SNAILS, FLOOR 5, CHRISTIAN KROHGS GATE 2, 0186, OSLO, NORWAY. 502 ON THE BUZZER

Snails is an artist-led studio collective and project space in central Oslo.

Contact us at wholovessnails@gmail.com / snails.no

Special thanks to: Galerie Khoshbakht

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Beth Collar is an interdisciplinary artist trying to live and work in Berlin, Germany. Her work employs carving, remembering, drawing, storytelling and performance to examine how identity and society are shaped through objects. Solo shows include; *Intercession*, Galerie Khoshbakht, Cologne (2024); *Bad Zeit*, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster, DE (2023); *FACE DOWN IN A DITCH*, Guts, Berlin (2022); *The Unforgiven*, Sundry, London (2022); *Basher Dowsing*, von ammon co, Washington, D.C. (2021); *"End Quote"*, stadium, Berlin (2020); *Daddy Issues*, Matt's Gallery, London (2019); *Thinking Here Of How The Words Formulate Inside My Head As I Am Just Thinking*, Waldo, New York (2018); *Cloaked Output Vol. 2*, Primary, Nottingham, UK (2018); *Seriously*, Standpoint, London (2017). Some group exhibitions; *Room Room*, Copenhagen (2025); *Neuer Berliner Kunstverein* (2024); *Haus am Waldsee*, Berlin (2023-4); *A E Shared Space*, Tbilisi (2022); *Cell Project Space*, London (2018); *Kunstverein München*, Munich (2017); and *KW*, Berlin (2016) Between 2015-20 Collar was an associated artist with the charity *Waterloo Uncovered* who use archaeology and the structures surrounding the dig to help in the recovery of veterans with mental health injuries. In 2024 she was resident with the 'Sustainable Institution' at E-WERK, Luckenwalde, DE, where she researched and built a carbon neutral kiln.

<https://www.khoshbakht.de/artist/beth-collar/>

Maryam Jafri lives and works in Oslo, Norway & New York, USA. For over twenty years she has worked across diverse media including video, installation, and photography, with a specific interest in questioning the cultural and visual representations of history and political economy and their impact on our quotidian experience. She is Professor of Contemporary Art at Oslo National Academy of the Arts (KHiO). Her work has been widely exhibited, including in solo shows at Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (US), Blaffer Museum of Art, Houston (US), Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (NL), Kunsthalle Basel, Basel (CH), Betonsalon, Paris (FR), Gasworks, London (UK), Kunsthall Aarhus (DK), Museet for Samtidskunst Roskilde (DK), Malmö Konstmuseum (SE), Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane (AUS), Contemporary Art Gallery of Vancouver (CA) and elsewhere. Recent biennials include Munch Triennial, Front International (Cleveland Triennial), Sao Paulo Biennial, Venice Biennial (Belgian Pavilion), Manifesta 9, Shanghai, Taipei, Bucharest, Thessaloniki, and Quebec City Biennial, among others.

<https://www.maryamjafri.net/>

Jessie Mott is a visual artist based in Chicago, Illinois, USA. Her practice focuses on themes of identity and power by exposing unstable perceptions of the queer body. Using an array of media such as painting, drawing, and animation, she gives life to creatures that negotiate permeable boundaries. She is best known for her watercolor drawings of hybrid creatures that explore a perverse fascination with the natural world. Bound up in desire, mourning, and anxiety, her work disrupts the margins of human and animal, abstraction and figuration, and interior and exterior worlds. Mott's work has been exhibited widely, most recently with Diane Christiansen at Hawthorn Contemporary in Milwaukee, WI; with queer scholar and writer Chantal Nadeau via their collaboration *Like Queer Animals* at the Epiphany Center for the Arts in Chicago, IL; and collaborative animations with artist and writer Steve Reinke, including *International Film Festival Rotterdam*, *VIDEOEX International Experimental Film & Video Festival* in Zürich and the *Whitney Biennial* in New York City. Mott has also participated in numerous art residencies, group and solo shows throughout the United States and abroad. Mott received a B.S. from New York University and an MFA from the department of Art Theory & Practice at Northwestern University.

<https://www.jessiemott.com/>

Steve Reinke is an artist and writer best known for his monologue-based video essays. From the Ottawa Valley, he now lives in Chicago. He is represented by Galerie Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin. He holds a BFA from York University, Toronto, ON, and an MFA from Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, NS. Exhibitions include *"Butter,"* MUMOK, Vienna, Austria (solo) (2020); *Welsh Pavilion of the Venice Biennale* with James Richards (2017); *"Portfolio A / Atheists Need Theology, Too / Semen is the Piss of Dreams / Drawings,"* Western Exhibitions, Chicago, IL (solo) (2017); *"The Genital is Superfluous,"* Isabella Bortolozzi, Berlin, Germany (solo) (2016); and the *Whitney Biennial*, New York, NY (2014). His videos have been screened at *Sundance Film Festival*, *Berlinale*, *International Film Festival Rotterdam*, *BFI London Film Festival*, and the *New York Film Festival*. His work is in many collections including the *Museum of Modern Art*, New York; *Centre Pompidou*, Paris; *MACBA*, Barcelona; and the *National Gallery of Canada*, Ottawa.

<https://www.myrectumisnotagrave.com/>

Kaare Ruud lives and works in Oslo, Norway. His artistic practice primarily focuses on sculptural interventions and works in a range of diverse and unconventional materials. He graduated with an MFA from the Oslo National Academy of the Arts (KHiO) in 2020. Ruud has had solo exhibitions at *Femtensesse* (NO, 2025); *Hordaland Kunstsenter* (NO, 2025); *Stormen Kunst/Dajdda* (NO, 2023); *CANTINA* (DK, 2023); *Samlingen* (NO, 2023); *Heerz Tooya* (BG, 2022); *SOL* (as *Sympathy* with Mikkel Carlsen, DK, 2022); *Hulias* (NO, 2022) and *Norsk Billedhoggerforening* (NO, 2020/2021). He has also participated in group exhibitions at *SIC* (FI, 2025); *Possibly sometime tomorrow* (FR, 2024); *Femtensesse* (NO, 2023); *MELK* (NO, 2023), *Hulias CANTINA* (IT, 2023); *STANDARD* (Oslo) (NO, 2021); and *QB Gallery* (NO, 2021/2022). His work has been acquired by the *National museum of Norway* and is represented in various private collections. He is participating in a group show at *Bergen Kunsthall* (NO, 2026).

<https://femtensesse.no/>