



**DISPLAY**

**Joe Bartram**

***Silver Bunny, Dummy***

**07.02.2026 – 15.03.2026**

It was 1959 when an animated rabbit appeared on American TVs. The rabbit had a single desire: to devour not carrots, just colorful Trix cereal endlessly. But then, two children would suddenly appear, snatching the cereal box from his paws and admonishing him: “Silly rabbit! Trix are for kids!” In that fleeting moment, desire was confined within a simple logic of exclusion and consumerism, revealing how advertising and images could regulate and limit the object of longing.

Through the lens of play and mass culture, Joe Bartram reframes familiar images as instruments of power. By appropriating icons and commodities of American consumer life, he exposes the false myths they quietly sustain. What happens when society’s heroes turn into anesthetics? When the language of childhood becomes the lingua franca of power? When a smiling mascot speaks for a public trained to feel and think less, just to function more? In Bartram’s work, America emerges as a collective state of mind, a mood simultaneously comical and tragic, playful and constraining: here, capitalism operates as an epistemic force, shaping needs, perception, and memory; here, reality dissolves into representation and spectacle supplants presence, masking the structures that underpin everyday life. Within the current political climate defined by surveillance, polarization, ecological neglect, colonialism, and aggressive rhetoric, spectacle and desire continue to anesthetize the public, keeping them entertained, scrolling, and distracted, while dulling sensitivity to structural violence and the slow erosion of empathy. Bartram investigates these dynamics by transforming discarded industrial forms into sculptural presences, revealing the hidden infrastructures of consumer culture. His styrofoam copy castings — rubber impressions derived from packaging waste — render tangible materials that are usually light, invisible, and disposable. Reappearing as smooth, colorful (or dark) and faintly seductive sculptures, they are not copies of

originals but residues of mass production itself. The artist manipulates familiar figures — Haribo candies, cartoon characters, architectural models, and even taxidermied chicks or police batons reimaged in toy-like form — constructing a distinct visual grammar and orchestrating a choreography of objects that guides the viewer through the dynamics of control and seduction. Playfulness and a mordant irony pervade the works, simultaneously entertaining the viewer while exposing the underlying structures of power. Thus, Bartram stages a landscape of cultural capitalism that is at once absurd and unsettling — a dream factory whose foundations continue to crumble. Repetition, exaggeration, and surreal juxtaposition structure the core of his practice, traversed by a dark irony in the depiction of ecological damage, institutional violence, and emotional desertification, revealing how traditional American ideals such as freedom, individualism and progress circulate no longer as lived values but as empty symbols, endlessly reproduced and consumed.

Engaging with television and industrial culture, Bartram transforms the exhibition space into a kind of analogical screen, where the works act as active agents, captivating and destabilizing the viewer while whispering the material essence from which they are made. The works confront us as toxic residues of American imagery, revealing how entertainment, pleasure, and freedom have been instrumentalized, standardized, and deferred. Seen from this vantage, the dream factory that once was America has closed its doors, leaving only remnants of its history and of betrayed expectations.



Joe Bartram, *Silver Bunny, Dummy*, 2026, installation view, DISPLAY, Parma, IT

Joe Bartram  
*Space Leap Figure Ascending*, 2026  
UV print on foam core, aluminum  
173 x 124 x 8 cm

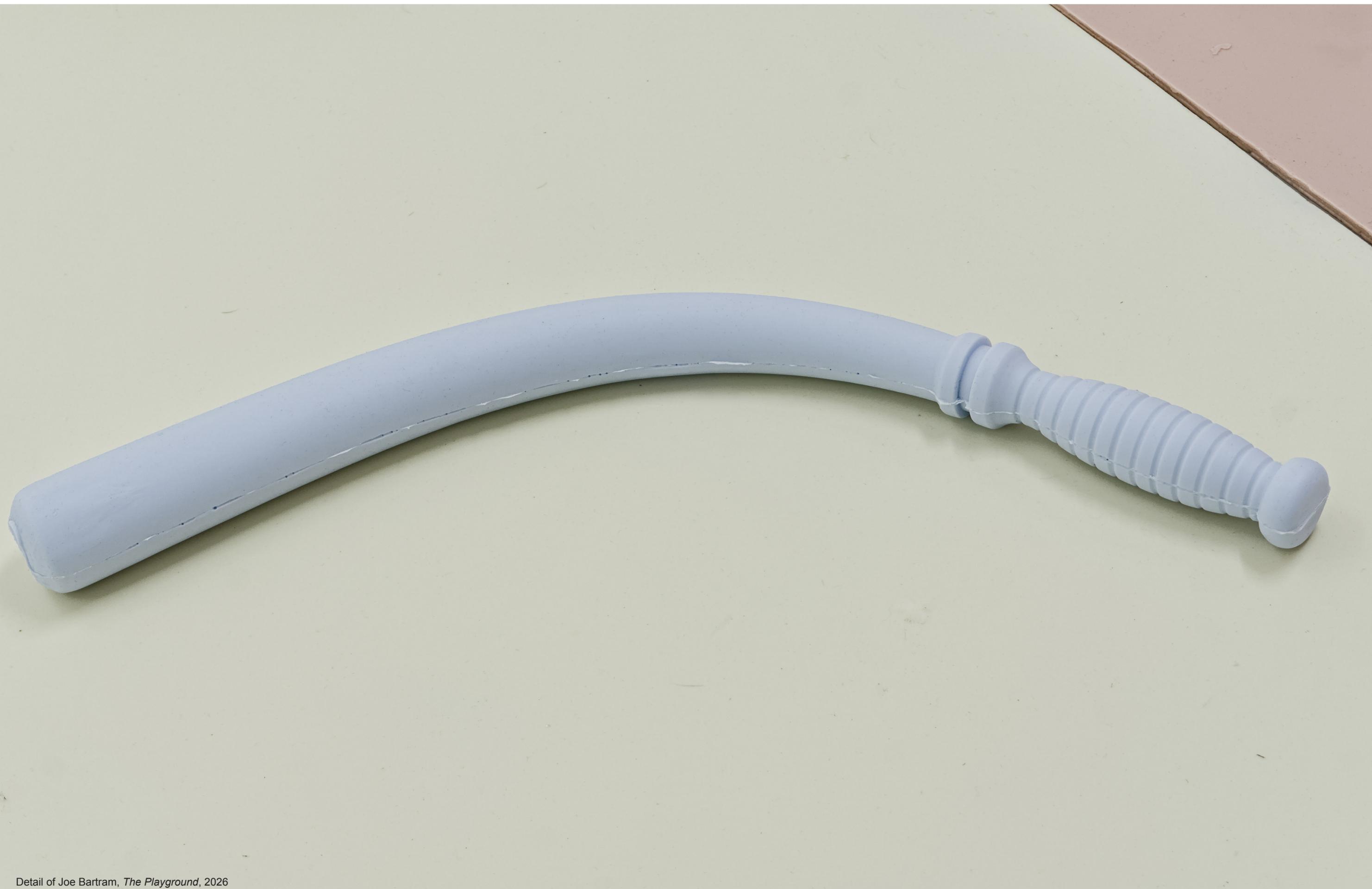




Joe Bartram, *Silver Bunny, Dummy*, 2026, installation view, DISPLAY, Parma, IT



Joe Bartram  
*The Playground*, 2026 (Detail)  
Silicone rubber, urethane foam  
Dimensions variable



Detail of Joe Bartram, *The Playground*, 2026



Detail of Joe Bartram, *The Playground*, 2026



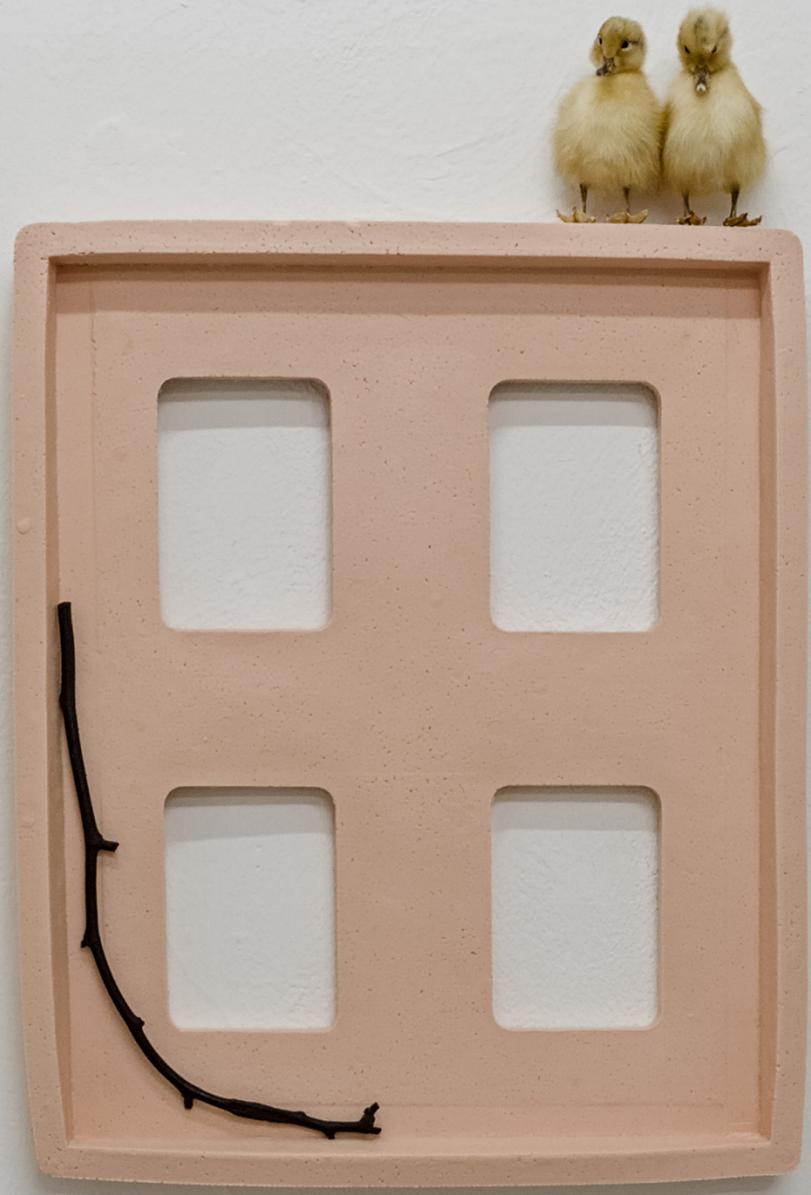
Joe Bartram  
*Lord, Can You Hear Us*, 2026  
Urethane resin, urethane foam, enamel, flocking, artificial plastic eyes  
67 x 34 x 7 cm



Detail of Joe Bartram, *Lord, Can You Hear Us*, 2026



Joe Bartram, *Silver Bunny, Dummy*, 2026, installation view, DISPLAY, Parma, IT



Joe Bartram  
*Trust Tree Rendezvous*, 2026  
Silicone rubber, urethane foam, taxidermy  
68 x 45 x 5 cm



Detail of Joe Bartram, *Trust Tree Rendezvous*, 2026



Joe Bartram  
*The Alchemist*, 2026  
Gouache on paper, cardboard, tape, water, dye, glass flasks  
81 x 67 x 40 cm

Detail of Joe Bartram, *The Alchemist*, 2026





Joe Bartram, *Silver Bunny, Dummy*, 2026, installation view, DISPLAY, Parma, IT



Joe Bartram  
*Untitled*, 2026  
UV print on ripstop, zipper, fiber fill  
Dimensions variable



Joe Bartram, *Silver Bunny, Dummy*, 2026, installation view, DISPLAY, Parma, IT



Detail of Joe Bartram, *Untitled*, 2026

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JOE BARTRAM

SILVER BUNNY, DUMMY



DISPLAY

[www.spaziodisplay.com](http://www.spaziodisplay.com)

Joe Bartram, *Silver Bunny, Dummy*, 2026, installation view, DISPLAY, Parma, IT

# DISPLAY

artist – run/project space h24/7  
Founded and curated by Massimo Allevato & perfettipietro  
Vicolo al Leon d'Oro 4/A, Parma, Italy

**Joe Bartram (b. 1989, Akron, Ohio, US)**, lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Bartram's work conceptualizes the notion of how built environments are transformed through industrial and technological processes and the ways in which societies are affected by consumerism, mass production, and the pipeline application of goods and services.

Selected exhibitions include MU/TH/UR, Barsa, Barcelona, Spain (2025); Shadows, Investigations, Vanishings, SHED Projects, Cleveland, Ohio (2024); Ficciones, M23, New York, NY (2023); Terra Nova, RESORT, Baltimore, MD (2021).

**DISPLAY** is an artist-run/project space based in Parma (Italy), founded in 2018 and directed by Massimo Allevato and perfettipietro.

Taking a cue from a curatorial and artistic approach based on researching and collecting images found on the Internet, the exhibition space is conceived as a hybrid device, an analogical and digital display visible 24/7 through its glassdoor.

Full documentation of the past exhibitions at DISPLAY is available at [www.spaziodisplay.com](http://www.spaziodisplay.com)

## CONTACT

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