

A B C D G H I N
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Max Popov: *Between you and me*

March 15—April 26, 2026

Gordon Robichaux is pleased to present *Between you and me*, an exhibition of recent sculptures by Max Popov. This is the artist's debut at the gallery, following our recent presentation of his work at Post-Fair in Los Angeles, and his two-person exhibition (with Imogen Brent) at Parent Company in New York.

Popov's solo exhibition brings together a group of three wall-based sculptures, a small "icicle" assemblage mounted to a pipe fitting near the ceiling, and a site-responsive work installed in the gallery's windows. The installation exemplifies the artist's sensitivity to context and site; his transformation of trash, antiquated electronics, and material technology; and his deeply felt experiences with objects that evoke transience and the resonance of memory.

The primary feature of the gallery space is two large windows that open to an expansive view of the city. Within their frames, Popov has installed *Between red and green (communal markers)*, which the artist describes as "an optical reliquary, a lens, and a container." The work comprises eight shelves—four per window—constructed from one-inch-thick sections of polished Plexiglas that span the width of the openings. The shelves support an arrangement of optical glass objects and geometric and irregularly shaped transparent "prisms" the artist has cast with epoxy resin. Upon close inspection, the installation reveals an array of images of monarch butterflies embedded within the luminous forms and carefully placed under, behind, and between them and the windowpanes. Popov explains:

For months, I collected images of monarch butterflies—from a sugar packet, a label on a bottle of hand soap, temporary tattoos, matchbooks, a screenshot of an animated monarch in Janet Jackson's "Together Again (Deeper Remix)" music video... Finding the images in kitsch and castoffs and refracting them into spectral

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light and urban space offers a temporal and spatial scale in which to hold grief, care, and permanence in harmony.

A second work, *Cenotaph for this building's former elevator*, is an elegiac object that resembles a marble column. The sculpture is fabricated from faux-marble panels the artist repurposed from the gallery's elevator following its recent refurbishment. Installed horizontally on the wall at waist-height, the work functions as a shelf for a single electric votive candle. One end of the sculpture is open, exposing the edges of its inner structure, which includes steel, plywood, aluminum honeycomb, and a postcard featuring the "City of Light," a massive illuminated architectural model of New York City created for the 1939 World's Fair. Developed and underwritten by Con Edison, the project celebrated the promise of electricity, technology, and an interconnected future.

Crouching down to peer inside Popov's sculpture, the viewer encounters a dark tunnel with miniature, illuminated streetlights that appear to recede into infinite space. One of the diminutive lights flickers in sync with the votive candle that rests on top of the work—a reference to street light interference, a phenomenon in which individuals believe they have a psychokinetic ability to affect electric lights.

On the opposite wall, *Standing stones from pennies from heaven and anyone*, is assembled from the plastic base of a revolving display stand with a brown woodgrain surface. Reoriented on the wall, the stand functions as a frame for a collection of pennies showing varying signs of wear that Popov collected "on the street, outside storage units, near train turnstiles, beneath cash registers." Here, the pennies are organized chronologically by mint year, in five vertical columns abutting washers and tattered bits of tin foil and cardboard—basic elements for the construction of a homemade battery. The columns are held in place by metal tabs that resemble battery contacts, two of which are connected to wiring that disappears into the plastic base. But the implied electrical function is purely symbolic, and the sculpture's title points to an idiom for good fortune and care as well as communal forms of art. The idea of "pennies from heaven," Popov explains,

...is a spiritual belief that finding pennies is a sign from angels or deceased loved ones, indicating they are watching over you and that all is well. But considering the circumstances of their discovery, it is also probably true that the pennies I found are the remains of a presumed loss, literally loose change. Like standing stones, the

penny is earthly material, defined communally and collectively across a spectrum of spiritual and mundane meaning.

A third wall work, *Negative of an accident*, is an indexical relief whose textured surface is covered with a grid of fifty-eight small thumbnail images of book covers dedicated to a wide range of subjects, including "TIME & SPACE," "GOYA," "INSECTS," and "FIRST LADIES." Popov has printed this abbreviated index of children's educational picture books, all from the Eyewitness series, onto a sheet of paper and fused it to the face of a plaster slab. The genesis of the enigmatic sculpture was a block of Styrofoam Popov encountered in a basement following a flood. Originally a packing element molded to the form of a desktop computer, the seemingly immutable material was transformed by termites eating and burrowing through it. Intrigued by the object, Popov recast its collaborative material history of production and consumption.

Max Popov (b. 1997, Washington, DC) lives and works in New York City. He received a BFA from The Cooper Union in 2019. He has presented exhibitions and gatherings at Parent Company (two-person with Imogen Brent), Brooklyn; Chatham Soccer, Chatham, NY; Kaleidoscope (two-person with Imogen Brent), Brooklyn; Shower, Seoul; Emily Harvey Foundation, New York; Swiss Institute, New York; and Putty's Coronation (two-person with Zhi Wei Hiu), Brooklyn.

For additional information, please contact gallery@gordonrobichaux.com.

Gordon Robichaux is open Friday–Sunday 12:00 to 6:00 p.m. and by appointment.

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