

M. L^EBLANC

Mindy Rose Schwartz | *Countersealed* | April 11th - May 23rd 2026

M. LeBlanc proudly presents *Countersealed*, Mindy Rose Schwartz's first solo exhibition in Chicago in over a decade, bringing together bodies of work made in the long aftermath of the pandemic and ensuing global crises. Rooted in the 1990s, Schwartz's use of macramé, ceramics, and other domestic materials draws on a feminist lineage that reclaims "women's work" as a category of formal and symbolic power. Schwartz extends these histories into a present shaped by ecological anxiety, abuse of power, spiritual disorientation, self-help, and the commodification of healing.

Schwartz's *Hard Scarves* (2026) are shaped wood panels painted with interference and glow-in-the-dark acrylic. The forms and their adorning patterns are taken from scarves passed down to the artist from women in her family, grandmothers, aunts, and mother, those who went before her and are now gone. The flickering surface produces a phantom image that shifts from violet to green or green to orange with the viewer's changing light and position. For Schwartz, the *Hard Scarves* function like the memory of those who gifted the models to her, obfuscated in signs and changing afterglows. While spare and frontal, Schwartz inflects the *Hard Scarves* with a domestic sensibility that situates them lightly within a lineage of pop-inflected minimalist inversions, like Artschwager's *Table with Pink Tablecloth* (1964), for example.

In other works, Schwartz uses natural, mainly anti-synthetic healing materials: peppermint oil, rabbit skin and fur, and tree branch looms. Her interactive *Incense Cones* (2022–25), installed at nose level or radially on the floor, are constructed from ancient elements used in traditional incense making; Schwartz uses tabu-no-ki wood powder, guar gum and wood, mixed with natural pigments like yellow and red iron oxide, viridian, burnt umber, and Prussian blue for color, and essential powders and oils like lavender, vetiver, clove, cinnamon, sandalwood, and lemongrass for smell. Nearby, Schwartz reassembles vintage outerwear from the '70s into four *Deconstructed Fur Coats* (2026); each coat, a skinned animal, is deconstructed again and refigured into a new form: feline, bovine, lamoid, or equine. In her tree branch looms, *Rose Wand*, *Orchid Wand*, *Leaf*, and *Iris*, Schwartz macramés golden thread and crystals into woven structures stretched between branch arms. The images created in the loom are imperceptible when viewed in the gold thread; instead, they resolve into ghostly figures cast in shadows cast onto the wall.

The new works in the exhibition are united under a shared birthday and time: November 19th, 2025 at 8am, during a Scorpio New Moon and Grand Trine, situating the exhibition within a cosmological framework aligned with cycles of death, transformation, and renewal. According to the sculptures' birth chart, Jupiter and Saturn appear in retrograde, encouraging a period of slowing down and reflection. In the north gallery, Schwartz extends this logic through a wishing well that departs from an ancient terracotta incantation bowl, a ritual object of the Sasanian period in Mesopotamia, or modern-day Iraq. These bowls, often referred to as magic or "devil-trap" bowls, are formed around a central demon Lilith encircled by a spiraling protection verse in Aramaic. They were buried upside down beneath the home to guard the family inside from evil. In *Countersealed*, Schwartz transforms the incantation bowl into a running fountain and wishing well, adding the twelve-part astrological zodiac to its structure. Water cascades over the manes of three female figures situated at each water alignment of the zodiac.

Schwartz completed a ritual with gold thread the night the wishing well was fired. To manifest her wish, she knotted a thread for each line of the incantation and burned them with the bowl in the kiln. The ritual is invented, not guaranteed, but hopeful. A Scorpio stellium frames the work within a dredging of the bog, where these distinct bodies of work turn toward the generative potential of mourning, and destruction

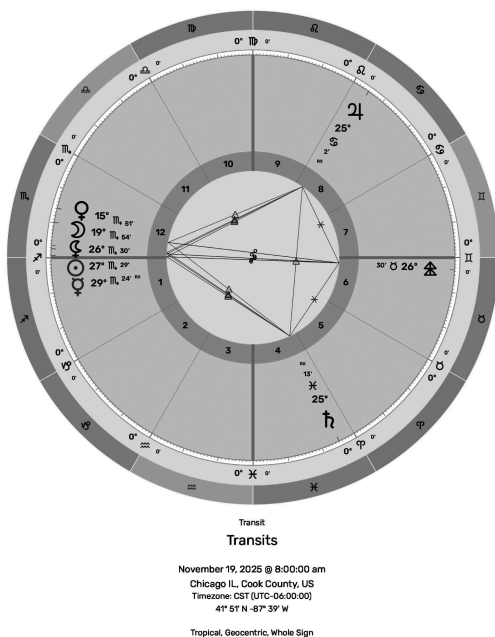
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prompts a call to action. In assigning an astrological order to the exhibition, translated by Schwartz into a charge for peace, the central wishing bowl invites group manifestation: protection in speaking and wishing in relation to the movement of water: “Sealed and countersealed are all forces of harm: their followers, their unjust gains, their power and influence, their divisive creeds, their duplicity, corruption, prejudice, slander, cowardice, and malice.”

exhibition text by Taylor Payton

Mindy Rose Schwartz (American, b. Chicago, IL) lives and works in Chicago. Recent solo exhibitions of Schwartz’s work include *Rude Awakening* (2025) at Sophie Tappeiner in Vienna, *Mindy Rose Schwartz* (2021) at Interstate Projects in Brooklyn, *Mindy Rose Schwartz* (2020) at Et. Al. Gallery in San Francisco, *Mindy Rose Schwartz* (2017) *Queer Thoughts* at Balice Hertling in Paris, *Mindy Rose Schwartz* (2017) at *Queer Thoughts* in New York, and *Alien Head Key Chains* (2017) at Atlanta Contemporary. Selected group exhibitions include: Artists Space in New York City, US (2025), King’s Leap in New York City (2024), Tatjana Pieters Gallery in Ghent, BE (2021), The Renaissance Society in Chicago, US (2018), Room E-10 27 in Berlin, DE (2018), Carlos Ishikawa in London, UK (2018), Cooper Cole in Toronto, CA (2017), Alter Space in Los Angeles, US (2016), Galerie Hussenot in Paris, FR (2015) and Arcadia Missa, UK (2015). Schwartz completed her MFA at the University of Illinois in Chicago.

The exhibition marks a significant moment in a career that has influenced Chicago artistic production for decades. In addition to her studio practice, Schwartz contributes to the academic discourse on craft and sculpture as an instructor in the Sculpture Department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her course, Extreme Craft, examines traditional sculpture and craft processes in relation to notions of taste, class, gender, and age.



This Wish is for halting, transforming, and healing the destruction and loss of life caused by all misguided and violent acts. Bound are the selfish impulses; sealed are the shadows of ignorance. Bound are the spirits of cruelty; sealed are the warmongers, deceivers, tormentors, liars, destroyers, abusers, and those consumed by greed. The evil eye is turned away, banished from this world. Sealed and countersealed are all forces of harm—their followers, their unjust gains, their power and influence, their divisive creeds, their duplicity, corruption, prejudice, slander, cowardice, and malice. Grant the ability to remember and mourn what has been lost, to learn from the mistakes of the past, and make the changes necessary to enact caring, peace, wisdom, curiosity, generosity of spirit, kindness, empathy, and joy. Now and Forever.