

# HESSE FLATOW

## *Getting to Ick*

December 15, 2023 - January 20, 2024

Opening reception: December 15, 6-8pm

*Inside a body there is no light. A massed wetness pressing in on itself, shapes thrust against each other with no sense of where they are. They break in the crowding, come unmade. You put your hand to your stomach and press into the softness, trying to listen with your fingers for what's gone wrong. Anything could be inside.*

- Alexandra Kleeman "You Too Can Have a Body Like Mine"

HESSE FLATOW is proud to present *Getting to Ick*, a group exhibition featuring the work of twelve artists: Ever Baldwin, Corydon Cowansage, Alison Croney Moses, Lucy Kim, Julia Kunin, Molly Lowe, Leeza Meksin, Bridget Mullen, Estefania Puerta, Douglas Rieger, Victoria Roth, and Grace Sachi Troxell.

Focusing on the guttural and internal, this show probes at the experience of living in and having a physical body. Delving into pleasure, pain, and the banal, the works touch upon the idiosyncratic and yet universal experiences that accompany being a human. Wounds and scars are hidden from outward view. Natural occurrences such as stomach gurgles and phlegmy sneezes are apologized away to others and treated as if they were grotesque. The artists in this show use abstraction to unveil bodily parts and experiences; eyes, breasts, stomachs, and buttocks are transformed into permutations simultaneously monstrous and grand. In a world where health and fitness fixations compete with a post-pandemic awareness of the limitations of one's body, these artists consider the mechanisms of the flesh.

Materiality is at the center of this exhibition. Alison Croney Moses uses wood to mimic peeling skin and the pressure of blood right under the surface in a visceral turn. Bulbous, amorphous clay orbs composed of an amalgam of casts from Grace Sachi Troxell's family members and vegetation appear akin to calcified rock formations straight out of the Earth. Craggily outstretched arms, a spindly tail, and curious ear/eye hybrids punctuate Estefania Puerta's wall work, a reference to the mythical plant-humanoid mandrake. Julia Kunin's ceramic works cheekily highlight the swooping of breasts and buttocks of uneven size and shape. The surfaces of Leeza Meksin's works explode into vibrant hieroglyphic-like patterns of bodily buildings. Ululating underbellies and oblong shapes are both weighty and sensual in Ever Baldwin's constructions. At once titillating and repulsive, Douglas Rieger's sculptures are imbued with erotic references shrouded by a strangeness.

Externalizing the internal, the works of the painters in the show dissolve into the language of abstraction. They insert limbs, hair, facial features, and flesh into their compositions, grounding an otherwise otherworldly out-of-body experience. Placed from a high vantage point, as if on an operating table, Bridget Mullen's work feature prodding and poking hands that rip apart organs and pluck away hair in actions that are part-science experiment, part beautification ritual. Corydon Cowansage drapes locks of hair and lips across her canvases, their graphic quality wiping away specificity from any particular pair of lips. Lucy Kim's work playfully juxtaposes direct impressions of objects and bodies with smooth painted imagery, clashing reality with the ideal. Victoria Roth's paintings are sinewy and bold, suggesting references to a brain's synapses or the regeneration of cells. With bright heaps of limbs, Molly Lowe's forms unfold atop themselves, finding joy and anguish in the curling of a bicep, the unflexing of a leg.

The title of the exhibition is a reference to the essay by art historian and curator Linda Norden, "Getting to 'Ick'" published in the exhibition catalog in conjunction with the exhibition *Eva Hesse: A Retrospective* at the Yale University Art Gallery. The works in this show blur the line between repulsion and attraction, perhaps getting to what Eva Hesse envisioned as a reprisal against self-hatred, an embrace of living in and being a human body, of knowing oneself, her "Ick," the German "Ich" or "I".

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**Ever Baldwin** lives and works in Catskill, NY. He holds a BFA in painting from The Maryland Institute College of Art and an MFA from The School of The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Recent solo exhibitions include Ogunquit Museum of American Art, Ogunquit, ME; Marinaro, New York; Emma Gray HQ, Los Angeles, CA; and JAG Projects, Hudson, NY. His work has been included in group shows at Vielmetter, Los Angeles, CA and Modern Art, London, UK. Ever is a 2021 recipient of the NYFA/NYSCA Fellowship in Painting.

**Corydon Cowansage** received an MFA in painting from RISD and a BA in art from Vassar College. She has attended residencies at the Bronx Museum of the Arts and the Yale Norfolk School of Art. Recent solo exhibitions include Kaufmann Repetto, Sean Horton (presents) and Chart (New York, NY). Her work has most recently been included in group exhibitions at Almine Rech (Brussels, Belgium), Sperone Westwater (New York, NY), The Pit (Los Angeles, CA), and Everyday Gallery and PLUS-ONE Gallery (Antwerp, Belgium), among others. She lives and works in New York.

**Alison Croney Moses** creates wooden objects that reach out to your senses—the smell of cedar, the color of honey or the deep blue sea, the round form that signifies safety and warmth, the gentle curve that beckons to be touched. Her work is in the collections at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston and Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. She is a recipient of the 2022 USA Fellowship in Craft and has been featured in American Craft Magazine. She holds an MA in Sustainable Business & Communities from Goddard College, and a BFA in Furniture Design from Rhode Island School of Design. She was recently named one of the 2023 WBUR 10 Makers. In the Fall of 2023, Alison had her first solo show at Abigail Ogilvy Gallery, Boston.

**Lucy Kim** is an interdisciplinary artist working across painting, sculpture, and biological media. In her hybrid works, she embraces distortion as a tool to deconstruct how we see what we see: the relationship between our evolved vision-centricity, constructed socio-cultural systems, and personal desires. Kim is a recipient of the 2022 Creative Capital Award for her project printing images with bacteria that has been genetically modified to produce melanin, the bio-pigment behind human skin, hair, and eye color. She began this project while an artist-in-residence at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, and continues to develop it at Boston University, where she teaches. Through this project, Kim expands her committed study of our visual habits, which she first began in her sculptural paintings using unconventional processes in the studio. Kim is based in Cambridge, MA and is Associate Professor of Art at Boston University.

**Julia Kunin** lives in Brooklyn, NY. She earned a B.A. from Wellesley College and an M.F.A. from The Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University. Kunin has had solo exhibitions at Kate Werble Gallery, New York; McClain Gallery, Houston; Sandra Gering Gallery, New York; Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas; Greenberg Van Doren Gallery, New York; and Deutches Leder Museum, Offenbach, Germany; and group exhibitions with Mother Gallery, New York; AMOCA, Los Angeles; the Longhouse, East Hampton; EFA Gallery, New York; and LACMA, Los Angeles. Among her accolades include a Fulbright Scholarship to Hungary; Trust for Mutual Understanding Grant to Hungary; Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant; Art Omi Residency, Ghent; John Michael Kohler Arts/Industry Artist Residency; The MacDowell Colony Fellowship; The Marie Walsh Sharpe Art Foundation Fellowship; CEC Artslink Grant to The Republic of Georgia; Artist Residency in Wiesbaden, Germany; Yaddo Residency; The Millay Colony, Vermont Studio Center; The Core Program, Houston; and Skowhegan. Julia Kunin currently has a series of ceramic lamps at Ralph Pucci International. In 2022, she contributed artist interviews to Two Coats of Paint. She is also a member of the board of FIAR, The LGBTQ Fire Island artist residency. Her work was recently acquired by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), and The Museum of Art and Design, New York.

**Molly Lowe** received her MFA from Columbia University and her BFA from Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). She has had solo exhibitions and performances at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; Lilith Performance Studio, Malmo, Sweden; Pioneer Works, Brooklyn, NY; Anat Ebgji, Los Angeles CA; Suzanne Geiss Company, New York, NY; SculptureCenter, Long Island City, New York; and Performa 13, New York, NY. Her films have screened at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY and JOAN, Los Angeles, CA. Lowe has participated in residencies at the Shandaken Project, Storm King Art Center, New Windsor, NY; Pioneer Works, Brooklyn, NY; Recess Art, New York, NY; and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME. In 2015, she received the New

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York Foundation for the Arts interdisciplinary artist fellowship award, and she was recently nominated for a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation award. Lowe lives and works in New York.

**Leeza Meksin** is a New York-based interdisciplinary artist working in painting, installation, drawing, public art and multiples. Her work investigates parallels between conventions of painting, architecture and our bodies. Meksin has created site-specific installations for The deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, The Brooklyn Academy of Music, National Academy of Design, The Uptown Triennial, NYC, Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, The Kitchen, BRIC Media Arts. She has also exhibited her paintings at Regina Rex Gallery, Thomas Erben Gallery and Brandeis University, among many other venues. In 2021 Meksin was awarded the NYFA/NYSCA Artist Fellowship in Interdisciplinary Work, and in 2015 received the emerging artist Rema Hort Mann Foundation grant. In 2019, Meksin was artist-in-residence at The Chinati Foundation in Marfa, TX. Her work has been featured in Bomb, The Brooklyn Rail, The New York Times, Hyperallergic, Chicago Tribune, and The Village Voice. In 2013 Meksin co-founded Ortega y Gasset Projects, an artist-run gallery in Brooklyn that she continues to co-direct. Meksin received a MFA from Yale School of Art, a BFA from The SAIC and a BA/MA in Comparative Literature from The University of Chicago. In 2021 she joined the faculty at Cornell University in the College of Architecture, Art, Planning (AAP).

**Bridget Mullen** holds an MFA from Massachusetts College of Art and a BAE from Drake University. She has been awarded residencies at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Headlands Center for the Arts, The Jan Van Eyck Academie, The Lighthouse Works, Roswell Artist-In-Residence Program, The Fine Arts Work Center, MacDowell, and Yaddo. Her recent solo exhibitions include Shulamit Nazarian, Los Angeles, CA; Nathalie Karg, New York, NY; Helena Anrather, New York, NY; and Annet Gelink, Amsterdam, Netherlands; and recent group exhibitions include Anne Barrault, Paris, France; Bosse & Baum, London, UK; Wild Palms, Düsseldorf, Germany; DC Moore, New York, NY; Fahrenheit Madrid, Madrid, Spain; and L21, Mallorca, Spain. She is the 2022 recipient of the Chiaro Award from Headlands Center for the Arts, a 2021 recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts Painting Fellowship, and a 2017–2018 recipient of a studio from the Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program. Mullen's work has been featured in Artforum, The Brooklyn Rail, Juxtapoz, Maake Magazine, and ArtMaze. Her work is in the collections of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam, Netherlands, the Anderson Museum of Contemporary Art in Roswell, NM, and the Carolyn Campagna Kleefeld Contemporary Art Museum, Long Beach, CA.

**Estefania Puerta's** work delves into organic/inorganic materials to form new poetics of transformation and translation. She is interested in what is gained and lost in the process of making and the new worlds that can emerge from metaphors. Her practice is rooted in world making, shape shifting, border crossing, and language failure. Her research in psychoanalysis as it relates to the history of hysteria, natural medicine/folklore, and personal histories of immigration and undocumentedness in the U.S. has led to questions around what is considered "natural" and "alien" in her materially diverse work. Her work has been recently exhibited at Lyles and King (NYC), Micki Meng Gallery (SF), Hales (NYC), and Someday Gallery (LA). She is a recipient of the 2024 Rome Prize.

**Douglas Rieger** works in Brooklyn NY. He received his MFA from Yale School of Art in 2016. Rieger pulls inspiration from many areas to inform his practice; interior design, fashion, motorcycle culture, industrial decay, product packaging, manufacturing processes and masculine archetypes to name a few. Certain recurring themes weave throughout his oeuvre, most notably notions of male identity and masculinity, the queer body, the disjunction between fine art and craftsmanship, and the varying presence or anonymity of the persona traceable in a physical object. Appropriating forms from their original context and using them as bodily appendage, architecture element and art form, Rieger brings forth aspects of the mechanical, the humorous, the libidinal, and the unknown in his wall sculptures and free-standing works.

**Victoria Roth** is a visual artist living and working in Brooklyn, NY. She has exhibited her paintings and drawings internationally. She has had solo exhibitions with Broadway Gallery, New York; Brennan & Griffin, New York; and fAN Kunstverein, Vienna; and group exhibitions with Hales Gallery, New York; Kate Werble Gallery, New York; Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn; Galleria Anna Marra, Rome; 1969 Gallery, New York; Institute of Arab & Islamic Art, New York; LeX Field Gallery, Los Osos; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; George Adams Gallery, New York; The Pit, Los Angeles;

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Helena Anrather, New York; Lulu, Mexico City; among others. She is in the public collection of Le Nouveau Musée National de Monaco, Monaco. Victoria Roth grew up in France and received her MFA from Columbia University in 2014 and a BA in History of Art & Architecture and Visual Arts from Brown University in 2008. In addition to her studio practice, Victoria Roth is an educator who teaches painting and drawing in New York City.

**Grace Sachi Troxell** is a sculptor based in New York. In her current work she uses clay and found objects to explore entanglements between organic and inorganic materials, form and deformity, and digestion. She received a BS in Studio Art from Skidmore College, a Post-Graduate certificate in painting from the Glasgow School of Art, and an MFA from Cornell University. She has been artist in residence at Sharpe - Walentas, MacDowell, Yaddo, Sculpture Space, the Studios at MASSMoCa, Woodstock Byrdcliffe, Willapa Bay AiR, The Pottery Workshop in Jingdezhen, China, Dumfries House, Scotland, and The International Textile Art Symposium, Daugavpils Rothko Center, Latvia. Troxell's work has been included in exhibitions in NYC at Wave Hill and Alison Bradley Projects and at other venues in New York that include: Cohen Gallery, Alfred Herbert F. Johnson Museum, Ithaca; The Hartnett Gallery, The University of Rochester; String Gallery, Wells College, Aurora and Woodstock Artists Association and Museum. She currently is a Visiting Assistant Professor at Hamilton College.