

*Evidence of Circumstance* is a group exhibition presenting works in video, sculpture, print, painting, and collage, by five contemporary artists: Mitsuko Brooks, Corin Hewitt, Dani Levine, Helen Mirra, and Calixto Ramírez. Though their practices vary widely, the artists gathered here seek out discovery through chance encounters with the physical world. I have brought together works that share questions I have in my own practice, specifically how circumstance—forces beyond one's own control—can work in tandem with artistic will. In these works, contingency, coincidence, movement, and environment lend a hand to artistic process, imparting their agency through material transformation.

Mitsuko Brooks sends mail art to friends, strangers, and her future self, releasing personal messages into public circulation. As a librarian, Brooks collects discarded book covers, onto which she collages diaristic writings, wishes, words of protest and resistance, and archival material. Neighbors and postal workers contribute additional markings, sometimes unintentionally, folding together author and recipient. Sometimes, Brooks archives the letters in large paintings, memorializing her expressions and coming to terms with letting go.

Corin Hewitt's *Recomposed Roman Monochromes* break down the division between an image and what it depicts, collapsing vision, site, and time. After photographing tourists taking photos of Rome, Hewitt averaged the pixels digitally into monochromatic prints, which he buried in the city where the photos were taken. After a period of time, he unearthed each one, scanning the transformed and decomposed print, revealing the element of place in the image's making.

Dani Levine's large paintings are composed of organic and synthetic materials. Levine treats pigments and grounds as fellow actors in the studio, fusing her own compositional plans with their alchemical agenda. The motifs of a billowy sail and a rhythmic pinwheel recur in Levine's work, suggesting wind and motion as metaphors of change. The direction that a painting takes is not up to the artist alone, but guided by a mixture of artistic will and the slipperiness of matter.

Helen Mirra's two small sculptures sit on the floor, humble and austere. The wooden planks were hand-hewn from shipping palettes the artist brought back to her studio in Berlin in 2006. That's when she found the pinecones too, in the Grunewald forest. Reconfigured, the sculptures evidence the trees they came from and those who might have walked by.

Calixto Ramírez uses his body to understand and gauge the physical world. He responds improvisationally to surface texture, vagaries of weather, and various instruments, documenting these brief and unscripted encounters with a fixed-frame video camera. Using the simplest means possible, Ramírez assimilates into the scene while grazing against, and sometimes crossing, the lines of predictable behavior.

—Josephine Halvorson

*Evidence of Circumstance* will be on view March 17 through April 22, 2023, concurrent with the solo exhibition *Josephine Halvorson: Unforgotten*. A public opening reception for both shows will be held Friday, March 17, from 6-8 PM.

# SIKKEMA JENKINS&CO.

**Mitsuko Brooks** (b. Misawa Air Force, Aomori, Japan) received her BFA from Cooper Union (2005) and her MFA in Painting and Drawing from UCLA (2017). She also received a MLIS & Certificate in Archives and Preservation of Cultural Materials from Queens College in 2021. Her forthcoming solo exhibition, *Letters Mingle Souls*, will be presented at Brattleboro Museum & Art Center this spring. She has participated in residencies at the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts (2022), Wassaic Artist Residency Program (2013) and The Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden (2012) and was awarded grants from the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation (2021), Common Field (2017), and the Edward & Sally Van Lier Fellowship (2012), among others. Brooks' zines, artist books, and mail art collages are included in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian's Archive of American Art, Washington, DC; Artex Information Centre, Montreal; Barnard College Library, NY; Asian American Arts Centre, NY; Asian Art Archive in America, Brooklyn, NY; and The Los Angeles Contemporary Archive, CA. She lives and works in Brooklyn.

**Corin Hewitt** received his BA from Oberlin College and his MFA from Bard College. His work has been shown in solo exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY; Institute of Contemporary Art VCU, Richmond, VA; Atlanta Contemporary Arts Center, GA; and the Seattle Museum of Art, WA. Hewitt was a recipient of the 2014-15 American Academy Rome Prize, the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship (2011) and a Joan Mitchell Fellowship (2010). He is currently Professor of Sculpture + Extended Media at Virginia Commonwealth University.

**Dani Levine** received her BFA from Rhode Island School of Design (2012) and her MFA from Yale University (2016). She currently works as an adjunct professor at Pratt Institute and is a recurring lecturer at schools such as Princeton and Boston University. Her work has been featured in exhibitions at SOLOWAY, Brooklyn, NY; The Alfred Museum, Alfred, NY; The Abrons Arts Center, NY; Field Projects Gallery, NY; and Fjord Gallery, Philadelphia, PA, among others.

**Helen Mirra** (b. Rochester, NY). Recent solo exhibitions include *du vent au vent* at the Musée d'art contemporain de la haute-vienne, France (2021) and *Nine Years of Slope-Walking* at Museo de Arte de Zapopan, Mexico (2020). She received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2020, and has been in residence at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, the International Artists Studio Program (IASPIS) in Sweden, and the DAAD Berlin, among others. Her work can be found in the collections of The Art Institute of Chicago, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. She lives in West Marin, CA.

**Calixto Ramírez** was born on the border of Reynosa with Hidalgo, TX, and studied in the National School of Painting, Sculpture and Printmaking, Mexico City. From 2013-2018, he was invited to live in Rome by Jannis Kounellis, a member of the Arte Povera movement. His work has been featured in solo and group exhibitions at Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes, Jumex Museum, Museo de Arte Moderno, Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, and Museo de la Cd. De México; Museo de Arte de Sonora, Hermosillo; Escuela Superior de Música y Danza de Monterrey, Obispaño; Museo del Novecento, Naples, Italy; and the National Gallery of Arts, Tirana, Albania. In 2020, he was awarded FONCA's "Contigo a la distancia" grant and participated in the 2017 XXIII ONUFRI Prize in Albania and the Monitor Gallery / Antonello Colonna residency in Labico, Italy. He currently lives and works in Monterrey, Mexico.

## UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

WARDELL MILAN

APRIL 28 – MAY 26

For additional information please contact Laura Weinthal at 212.929.2262 or [laura@sikkemajenkinsco.com](mailto:laura@sikkemajenkinsco.com).