

**CECILIA CALDIERA
ADA FRIEDMAN
BRANDON MORRIS**

September 21, 2023 – December 9, 2023

Opening Reception: Thursday, September 21, 2023, 4:30–7:30pm

Cecilia Caldiera, Ada Friedman, Brandon Morris presents three artists working across painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture and performance—all radically engaged with the power of daily ritual and the transformative potential of everyday activities or materials to speak to the cosmic, the mythological and the phantasmagoric. Often incorporating found objects or traces of found objects and artifacts from ephemeral activities or performances, the artworks included address the ultimate paradox of the artist working in the palimpsest of New York City: to digest, contend with and reflect on the current moment amidst the perpetual exposure to residual energies of the past and the expansive possibilities of the future.

Ada Friedman's "Everyday Drawings" and "Performance Proposals" incorporate her habitual actions in the studio and provide access points into the holistic world of her energetic workspace. Checkmarks or tallies record time spent working and writing communicates her self-reflexive questioning, and is a direct extension of a stream of consciousness while working. Color and form delineate territory of the studio space itself or possible movements/performances yet to be determined. Every decision is intentional and indexical and together they form a type of multi-dimensional journaling project that sits deeply rooted in the present moment. While forever tethered to mark-making from all of history from cave-painting to current and modern abstraction and everything between or after. Friedman's "Wing and Wheel" works extend from a performance *Helen Rides V*, a play she wrote, staged and directed at All Saints Church in midtown Manhattan in 2019. This performance is part of an ongoing series of works connected to the ballad poet Helen Adam. The "wings" reference the Blue Moths featured in Adam's story the "Riders To Blokula"—symbolizing, as Friedman states, "the slippage between overlapping worlds or different concurrent realities."

Through a process of collecting, cataloging and rebuilding, Cecilia Caldiera makes assemblage sculptures with found industrial metals, plastics, masonry and other materials, often utilizing familiar objects such as an abandoned shopping cart, rebar and cardboard. Caldiera forges an equilibrium between the precarious ecology of materials discarded throughout the city and an activist drive to engage directly with the immediate concerns of public spaces and local histories. In her works *Icarus Was Here and We Have Been Here Before, Part One*, found objects and imprints of materials sway together in a fragile choreography that calls attention to the cycles of renewal, transformation and displacement that perpetually upend the urban landscape.

Over the past year and a half, in an ongoing series, Brandon Morris has been working with found Victorian-era teapots to construct sculptures which are covered in leather. Each teapot is sheathed in leather that has been molded, sutured, appended and sometimes dyed, mapping the contours of the object, with the occasional handle or spout protruding out like a limb. Morris anthropomorphizes each teapot transforming them into unflinchingly necessary objects, fusing design and fashion histories from the Victorian and Gothic to Japanese Anime and horror. Morris works the teapot into an archetypal form that exudes a sense of narrative and delirium, conjuring allusions to the everyday rituals of tea and adornment—and the subcultures that form amidst the collision of aesthetic value systems.

Cecilia Caldiera, Ada Friedman, Brandon Morris is organized by Max Warsh, Director of the Yeh Art Gallery, St. John's University.

Bios

Cecilia Caldiera is an interdisciplinary artist working in New York City. Using sculpture, printmaking, and documentation she aims to explore connections between people, public space, time and value. Cecilia graduated from Pratt Institute with a BFA in 2013 and worked with the EFA Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop up until attending Columbia University School of the Arts and receiving her MFA in 2023. Cecilia has shown work in New York, Washington D.C., L.A., Miami, Minneapolis, Colombia, Brazil, Barcelona, and Paris.

Ada Friedman has had recent solo and two-person shows at Kendra Jayne Patrick gallery in Bern, Switzerland (2022), University of Tennessee Knoxville Downtown Gallery (2022), Grifter, NYC (2020) and Safe Gallery, Brooklyn (2018). She has been included in group shows at Cleopatra's, Brooklyn; Situations, NYC; Adds Donna, Chicago; and Redling Fine Art, LA, among many others. Her plays or time-based paintings have been staged in NYC at All Saints Church, Essex Flowers, Safe Gallery, and White Columns. Ada holds an MFA from Bard College in Painting and lives and works in Brooklyn.

Brandon Morris is a Brooklyn-based multidisciplinary artist who recently completed a degree at Parsons this past Spring. Morris had his first solo exhibition at Gern En Regalia in 2022. He has exhibited with Europa gallery at NADA New York, and in group exhibitions at Storage Art Gallery and the NADA exhibition space in NYC.

Admission

Free and open to the public.

Hours

The Yeh Art Gallery is open to the campus community and members of the public.

When exhibitions are open, our hours are:

Tuesday–Friday, 10am-5pm

Saturday, 12–5pm

Location

Yeh Art Gallery

Sun Yat Sen Memorial Hall

St. John's University

8000 Utopia Parkway

Jamaica, New York 11439

Parking

Please note there is ample street parking in the neighborhood around St. John's University. Guests to campus can also obtain a visitor parking pass at the Gate 1 entrance (Kildare Road + Utopia Parkway). This pass allows you to park in select "General Parking" areas on the campus (see campus map below).

Directions by Subway/Bus:

F to 169th Street + Q-30/Q-31 Bus or walk (about 15 min.)

E to Kew Gardens + Q46 Bus

Accessibility

The Yeh Art Gallery has a wheelchair-accessible entrance in the back of the building. Please contact us with questions about accessible parking locations or any other requests at warshm@stjohns.edu

Contact

718-990-7476

warshm@stjohns.edu

Website, Social Media

<https://sjuartgallery.org/>

<https://www.instagram.com/yehartgallery/>