

GROUP EXHIBITION

**BEAUTÉ EFFRACTION  
(BEAUTY BREAK-IN)**

January 12 — February 25, 2023  
Multidisciplinary



**Chloé Gagnon**

**Milan Milosavljevic**

**Ingrid Syage Tremblay**

**Charline P. William**

Through a richly-textured, colourful, and heterogenous collection of works, this exhibition speaks to an intelligence of the flesh and body. Femininity and sensuality suffuse each artist's aesthetic and subject, rendering a unique and complex notion of beauty in each. They bring out divergences, humour, irreverence, and resistance, while calling upon our *sense of passion* to counter the *disfiguration of the world*.\*

- \* *sens de l'éperdu* (roughly, "sense of the desperate" or "of passion") and *l'enlaidissement du monde* (the "disfiguration" or "uglification of the world") are expressions coined by Annie Lebrun, *Ce qui n'a pas de prix* (Paris: Stock, 2018).

Image: Detail of *Epitome of Excellence*, Chloé Gagnon, 2022, acrylic on canvas, 183.5 x 102 cm.  
Photo: Chloé Gagnon

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**esse**

Expressed in myriad forms ranging from painterly, delicate, bold, and vulnerable, the works of *Beauté effraction* (Beauty Break-In) celebrate a beauty galvanized by the senses and enlivened by the body. Grounded in a sense of intimacy and corporeality, the exhibition seeks to uncover an aesthetic complexity that extends beyond the constraints of a hyperactive commercial art system. Informed by surrealist poet and literary critic Annie Lebrun's "sense of the desperate" against the "uglification of the world," these pieces reflect a call to beauty as an anti-capitalist political gesture, which she describes as "a form of infraction [against] the neoliberal system that colonizes our spirits and hides other horizons of possibility."

In Chloé Gagnon's paintings, feminine and feline subjects abound amidst bold patterns and colours, punctuated with declarative text. Appealing to the instinctive and wild dimensions of the self, her work posits an identification with beauty as spirited and fun, yet unapologetically powerful and deserving of respect. With a collage-like composition style, strong lines, and an excess of kitsch iconography, her figments and figurations reimagine the history of aesthetics as a devilish joyride.

Working on both sides of the canvas, Charline P. William overturns painting traditions to create works that are both sculptural and tactile, speaking to the material and political conditions that arise from and impact our bodily existence. Affixed with metal grommets rather than stretched on traditional wooden frames, these pieces are provisional and anti-monumental, becoming wearable when used in performances, or turned into makeshift shelters, like one piece which hangs from the wall like a tent, cut with holes in shapes resembling human hands.

Milan Milosavljevic's subversive fabric works make use of codified materials such as satin and tulle to recreate objects

often associated with discipline and hierarchy, such as a pair of vertically-striped ribbons based on the military badges of his grandfather. These semi-abstract pieces examine cultures of power and control through the sense-memories and associations evoked by certain forms and textures, inverting and "feminizing" signifiers of traditional masculinity to blur and upend rigid social and gender roles.

Often engaging with materials and sites connected to nature and our place within it, Ingrid Syage Tremblay's work is marked by an attention to scale, using a variety of means to explore human consciousness and embodiment in playful and profound ways. With a technical approach linked to the tradition of sculpture as a slow and arduous process, her sensitively hand-rendered pieces are evidence of an encounter between the artist's body as material and the sentient material characteristics of living matter such as wood. Her enigmatic series of small carved figurines personify the constraints often faced by women sculptors, who historically had less access to large scale studios and materials. Somewhat reminiscent of ancient goddess figures, they become portals where the sacred and the everyday commingle.

Activating wood, fabric, and paint with their perceptive and inventive responses to the stuff of reality, the artists of *Beauté effraction* (Beauty Break-In) evoke minor histories and experiential narratives, creating space for new artistic potentials. In this collection of rich and reflexive artworks, beauty is substantiated as a politics of the sensorial.

- **Kayla Guthrie** writes about contemporary and underground art, with an interest in queer and transgender artists and art engaged with technology, music/sound, or performance.

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