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*Personae*

Patrick Carroll

September 8 - November 2, 2023

Press Release & Exhibition Text

*Personae* presents over twenty new works in Patrick Carroll's ongoing exploration of the material language of knitted textile. Carroll makes textiles by hand on a domestic knitting machine, using fine yarn from a collection he's amassed over years, before stretching the fabrics on stretcher bar frames to form artworks that inhabit the space bounded by painting, sculpture, and textile arts. The works are informed by, and aim to participate in, both art history and the history of literature, especially American lyric poetry. At question is how language, when given form, perverts the dichotomy of figuration and abstraction.

This show expands two fledgling dimensions of Carroll's work: scale and figuration. Works that approach the height and breadth of the body offer new felt relations to the conceptual play the pieces perform; works that reference, through pixelated image, episodes in the history of art both expand the citational domain and complicate the picture plane of Carroll's art.

*Personae* presents a psyche desperate, via what it has learnt in its study of what others have made, to make sense of the world. It is a show about the efficacy, the range, the texture, the experience, and the use of concepts. What is language and how is it encountered? How, in a person and between people, do language, concept, and image interact? How can visual pleasure inflect literary inquest? These are some of the questions that the works on display give body to.

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Patrick Carroll (b. 1990, Menlo Park, CA) is an artist and writer living in Los Angeles. Solo exhibitions include *Commonplacing*, The Meeting (New York); *Dungeness*, Goldfinch (Chicago); *Reading*, Giovanni's Room (Los Angeles); *Memoriam*, Fuji Textile Week (Fujiyoshida) and JW Anderson's Men's S/S 2023 (Milan). Group exhibitions include at *Lilac*, *Moonbeam*, and *Heavenly Blue*, Goldfinch (Chicago); *My Whole World*, Baader-Meinhof (Omaha) and *Any distance between us*, RISD Museum (Providence).

## Personae

**Antinomy:** C'mere!

**Archive:** of fairies, p. 37; of lyric energies eternalized in plastic form, p. 78; of dress, p. 245;

**Breath:** Rhythm is coeval with life.

**Citation:** Everything indexes everything. Each word refers to its every use ever. A work of art always offers a way out—into what went into it. Everything points—which we love!

**Craft:** Hands think material thoughts, & nothing can be got to the bottom of.

**Death:** Honestly dude . . . .

**Elegy:** Like James Merrill at his Ouija board, I'm just zhunk-zhunk-zhunking my machine to summon, e.g., Emily Dickinson, George Herriman, Elizabeth Bishop, Dunstan Thompson, and Mike Kelley for an utterly çhmmm? tête-à-tête.

**Fashion:** One of capital's many faces; a beautiful face, whose body grows tired of late—I use its waste.

**Forgetting:** I'm afraid everything is permanent!

**Form:** What was hovering over the face of the waters.

**Gaiety:** Courage.

**Haunt:** What you've gotta let the spectral do to the calculus. AKA: those little ratiocinations of yours . . . they're slipping and falling into hellmouths as we speak! (per Gayatri Spivak).

**Humor:** Life.

**Image:** Sometimes you must turn and face the music.

**Incantation:** It threw a gleam of recognition on here a post, and there a garden-fence, and here a latticed window-pane, and there a pump, with its full trough of water, and here, again, an arched door of oak, with an iron knocker, and a rough log for the doorstep.

**Jest:** Sometimes you knit a beach scene with a quote from a Hart Crane poem and a winged bomb from the Legend of Zelda and you laugh and laugh and laugh. In your head, Muriel Rukeyser: "The twentieth century / Stares from the high air—"

**Knitting:** 8-Bit, 8-Chewed, 8-Swallowed: From Stocking Frame to Nintendo Entertainment System. An array of loops—like everything, it unravels easily.

**Knowledge:** Wants what memory has and shan't *ever* get it!

**Labor:** What hovers always over the face of the waters.

**Lyric:** 1. "A spell is a document that commands mutation." 2. "Everything seems poised on the brink of becoming everything else." 3. It is "as if feelings and ideas were spirits that could improvise a body." (per Daniel Albright).

**Music:** The waters.

**Nakedness:** Kiss of our agony Thou gatherest,

**O:** Hand of Fire gatherest—

**Painting:** What one must do to pigment.

**Philology:** Sometimes you learn that *saecula*—the length of time of a generation, whence 'secular' AKA 'relating to worldly things contra the eternity of the 'world to come'—SOMEHOW has no etymological relation to *cycle*, and the great gears of the sky just turn and turn and turn ;).

**Play:** Systems, ecstasy, love, and the great beauty of what by acts of creation those who've lived have proven.

**Pleasure:** Can still be had.

**Poetry:** What one must do to language.

**Quiet:** Sometimes you've got to—sometimes you GET to—shut the fuck up!

**Representation:** A word on a page is a figure in a landscape.

**Scale:** Carried, embraced, or at the feet of—a body is a body is a body.

**Spirit:** Breath.

**Textile:** The origin of technology. Discovered when one person pointed to a spider's web, another pointed to a bird's nest, and the two together spoke the first words.

**Understanding:** This—a domestic knitting machine—shall be that—a word processor.

**Voice:** Yours is not your own. Every utterance is choral.

**Wonder:** A voice passes through you and you are transformed.

**XYZ:** Yes! Yes! Yes!