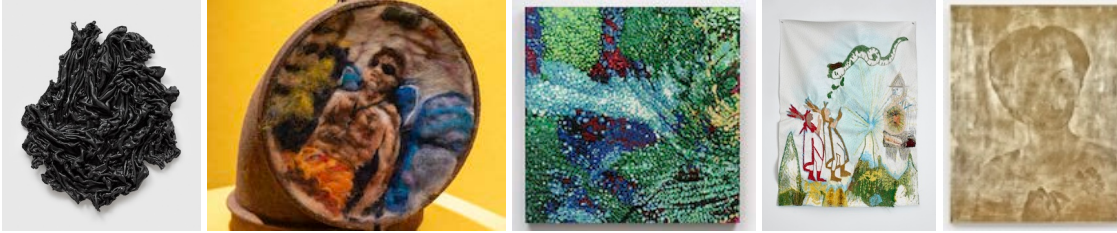


# REBECCA CAMACHO PRESENTS



## *We wake in the middle of a life, hungry*

Allana Clarke, Melissa Joseph, Young Joon Kwak, Griselda Rosas, Stacy Lynn Waddell

8 June through 13 July 2024

*We wake in the middle of a life, hungry*

The opening of Jane Wong's "After Preparing the Altar, the Ghosts Feast Feverishly." Rapturous and visceral, the poem is a metaphorical call and response engaging gluttony and hunger across multiple generations, positioning life as a ravenous and relentless experience and encouraging the reader to stay rooted to home and inherited culture, but also to fly, to embrace, to take a bite, to smother themselves in the world. Using Wong's poem as a point of departure, *We wake in the middle of a life, hungry* features the work of Allana Clarke, Melissa Joseph, Young Joon Kwak, Griselda Rosas, and Stacy Lynn Waddell, five female-identifying artists whose practices explore selfhood, identity, memory, and subjectivity, and whose work draws inspiration from their communities and their collaborative relationships.

Incorporating products associated with self-care and the beauty industry, Trinidadian-American artist Allana Clarke's practice considers how culture, history, and memory can be conjured through materials. Primarily employing a liquid latex commonly used to adhere hair extensions onto a person's scalp, Clarke's three-dimensional wall mounted sculptures begin by pouring hair bonding glue onto panels made of window screens. The bonding glue cures from the top, while remaining supple underneath for days and even weeks. During that time, Clarke manipulates the material through scraping, pulling, twisting, and pushing with the whole of her body, transforming herself into a site for action and embedding her labor-intensive movements and gestures into the undulating forms that punctuate the work's surface. Clarke pioneered her performative sculptural method to create a tangible history of grappling with and moving through systems designed to denigrate conceptions of Blackness.

The fiber-based practice of Melissa Joseph foregrounds connection and relationships through collective memory and shared experience. Her work speaks to issues of diaspora – how family histories are shaped and maintained – and the politics that govern how physical and emotional spaces are occupied. Sourcing imagery directly from personal photographs of family members, friends, and peers, Joseph's unique dry-felting medium records intimate domestic settings and specific moments of togetherness. *Bap in Puerto Rico* pictures Joseph's grandfather reclining on a beach and *Dr. Joe's Kitchen* shows her father in his home. In each, felted panels are positioned within upcycled steel objects that metaphorically relate to the picture at hand – *Bap* is placed within the opening of a steel pipe and *Dr. Joe* in an anchor. A third work, *What we leave behind*, was recently highlighted in the British Textile Biennial and features felted portraits of the artist as a toddler and her parents over a photograph taken in a park when visiting the city of Kochi, Kerala India where her father was born and raised, printed on a Dupioni silk textile.

Through a multi-faceted practice rooted in sculpture, installation, and performance, Young Joon Kwak considers how our bodies are sites of constant transformation, and in a perpetual state of evolving and becoming. Hovering between abstraction and figuration, residing in a space of in-betweenness, Kwak's sculptures require close looking. Composed of beads and mirrors that

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invite introspection through literal reflection, Kwak's deliberate gesture towards openness and exchange results in the ability for their audience to simultaneously see and be seen. To See Your Self Reflected in *Our Chameleonic Transformations (Neither Death Nor Dysphoria)* is an amalgamation of colored rhinestones applied to the surface in a pattern that is inspired by the chimeric camouflaging qualities of the chameleon. The sculptural companion piece to *Our Chameleonic – To Refuse Looking Away From Our Transitioning Bodies (Charlie With Chest Binder)* – is a cast of the upper torso of a member of Kwak's community whose "skin" has been outfitted with thousands of colored rhinestones. Both works were recently on view in *Made in LA 2023: Acts of Living* at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles.

Griselda Rosas uses embroidery on textile and sculpture to reference inheritance and intergenerational knowledge, utilizing skills passed down within her family – from grandmother to mother to child. Often collaborating with her young son, whose drawings are a foundation from which she builds her own work, Rosas intricately renders embroideries of fantastical imaginary beings on upcycled grain bags. Embracing the imagery found on the grain sacks, Rosas integrates her compositions into the existing texts and corporate logos. These complex compositions speak to the circulation of culture, to systems of value, and labor. Other works within Rosas' oeuvre speak to histories of colonialism and power through imagery culled directly from historical texts. *Premonición* – a large embroidery and acrylic work on faux ostrich skin – is an adaptation of historical colonial events in Central America. The figures in the foreground are extracted from *El Lienzo de Tlaxcala*, an illustrated text produced by the Tlaxcallans documenting the Mesoamerican wars that occurred during the early to mid 1500s throughout what is now known as Central America.

Closely considering authorship and historical narratives, Stacy Lynn Waddell questions how recorded histories correspond to power structures, and speak to topical issues of visibility, desire, and power. Waddell's subjects frequently include floral motifs, landscapes, and figuration, genres that follow the trends of global 'Golden Ages' – time periods often ascribed to the years immediately following a technological innovation that allows new forms of expression and new ideas – and manifested in varying geographies throughout Africa, North America, and Europe at different moments in time. Her works are made through experimental and alchemical processes including gold gilding and leafing, embossing and de-bossing, and gesture to value and trade and the distribution of wealth in the past and present. The optical effects of gold gilding are also fundamental to Waddell's thinking, as the reflective material inherently requires viewers to continually shift their position in order to apprehend the work, which always remains inaccessible. This technique is utilized in Waddell's *WOMAN WITH AFRO LOOKING BACK* and *SENIOR FORMAL WITH FLOWER* whereby found photographs are rendered in 22-karat gold leaf.

*Tell us, little girl, are you hungry, awake,                      astonished enough?*

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Gallery hours: Thursday, Friday, Saturday 12noon to 5pm

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## Allana Clarke

Allana Clarke (b. 1987, Trinidad & Tobago, West Indies) lives and works in Detroit, MI. She received her MFA from Maryland Institute College of Art in 2014, her BFA from New Jersey City University in 2011, and attended Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2014. She has had solo exhibitions at the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, Winston Salem, NC (2024, upcoming); Kavi Gupta Gallery, Chicago, IL (2023); A Particular Fantasy, Art Omi, Ghent, NY (2022); Usdan Gallery at Bennington College, Bennington, VT (2022); and Galerie Thomas Zander, Cologne, Germany (2022); amongst others. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at Library Street Collective, Detroit, MI (2024); SOVA Gallery, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK (2023); San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, San Luis Obispo, CA (2022); Akron Art Museum, Akron, OH (2022); and the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY (2022); amongst others. She received a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Arts Grant (2023); Red Bull Arts Micro Grant (2021); and a Puffin Foundation Grant (2019); amongst others. Clarke was in residence at Cultural DC, Washington DC (2024); Bennington College, Bennington, VT (2022); and NXTHVN, New Haven, CT (2021); amongst others. Clarke's work is in the collections of Frac des Pays De La Loire, Nantes, France and TD Bank Art Collection.

## Melissa Joseph

Melissa Joseph (b. 1980, Saint Marys, PA) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She received her MFA from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, her MAT in Art Education from the Rhode Island School of Design, her AAS in textile surface design from the Fashion Institute of Technology and her BA from New York University. She has had solo exhibitions at Artpace, San Antonio, TX (2024); Margot Samel, New York (2023); Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA (2023); REGULARNORMAL, New York (2021) and Fleisher Art Memorial, Philadelphia (2019); amongst others. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at UTA Artist Space, Atlanta, GA (2024); The Whitaker Museum, Lancashire, United Kingdom (2023); Green Art Gallery, Dubai (2023); Margot Samel, New York (2023); Charles Moffett, New York (2023); and Venus Over Manhattan, New York (2023); amongst others. She was a Windgate Foundation Scholar (2023); and was a Hopper Prize Finalist (2021); amongst others. Joseph was in residence at Artpace, San Antonio, TX (2024); Greenwich House Pottery Residency, New York (2023); Museum of Arts and Design, New York (2023); Archie Bray Foundation Residency, Helena, MT (2022); and the Fountainhead Arts Residency, Miami (2021); amongst others. Joseph's work is in the collections of the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami; Brooklyn Museum; The Bunker Artspace, West Palm Beach; Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts Museum, Philadelphia; Ruby City, San Antonio.

## Young Joon Kwak

Young Joon Kwak (b. 1984, Queens, NY) lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. She received her MFA from University of Southern California (2014), her MA in Humanities from University of Chicago (2010), and her BFA from School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2007). Recent and upcoming solo exhibitions include the Leslie Lohman Museum of Art, New York, NY (2025, upcoming); Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, CA (2024, upcoming); Korean Cultural Center, Los Angeles, CA (2021); Commonwealth & Council, Los Angeles, CA (2021); MSU Union Gallery, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI (2021); amongst others. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at the ICA LA, Los Angeles, CA (2024); Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington DC (2024); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA (2023); MSU Broad Art Museum, East Lansing, MI (2023); and Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham, UK (2023); amongst others. She is the recipient of an Artadia Award, Los Angeles (2024); was awarded the President's Postdoctoral Fellowship from UC Riverside (2024); and received a Fellowship for Visual Artists from the California Community Foundation (2022); amongst others. Kwak was an Artist-in-Residence in Critical Race Studies at Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI (2020); Santa Fe Arts Institute, Santa Fe, NM (2020); and Maine College of Art, Portland, ME (2019); amongst others. Kwak's work is in the collections of Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento; Dallas Museum of Art; MSU Broad Art Museum, East Lansing; and Speed Art Museum, Louisville.

## Griselda Rosas

Griselda Rosas (b. 1977, Tijuana, Mexico) lives and works in San Diego, CA. She received her MFA from San Diego State University in 2013, and her BFA from San Diego State University in 2006. Recent solo exhibitions include Luis De Jesus Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA (2024); UC Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, CA (2023); Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, La Jolla, CA (2023); Quint Gallery, La Jolla, CA (2022); and the Oceanside Museum of Art, San Diego, CA (2020); amongst others. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at Northern Illinois University Art Museum, DeKalb, IL (2022); William D. Cannon Art Gallery, Carlsbad, CA (2022); Quint Gallery, La Jolla, CA (2021); Kohta, Helsinki, Finland (2021); and Bread & Salt, San Diego, CA (2020); amongst others. In addition to her art practice Rosas taught drawing, painting, and embroidery as an adjunct professor from 2013 to 2022 at San Diego State University. Rosa's work is in the collection of the MCA San Diego.

## Stacy Lynn Waddell

Stacy Lynn Waddell (b. 1966, Washington, D.C.) lives and works in North Carolina. She received her MFA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2007, and her BFA from North Carolina State University, Raleigh, in 1993. Recent solo exhibitions include Candice Madey, New York, NY (2023); Sala 1, Rome, Italy (2022); Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, MA (2022); Candice Madey, New York, NY (2021); and the Visual Arts Center of Richmond, Richmond, VA (2015); amongst others. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at the Hunter Museum of American Art, Chattanooga, TN (2023); Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, NC (2023); Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, MA (2022); Currier Museum of Art, Manchester, NH (2022); and the Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC (2022); amongst others. She is the recipient of a Southern Constellations Fellowship (2014); an Art Matters Grant (2012); and a Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptors Grant (2010); amongst others. Waddell was in residence at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, MA (2022-23); Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellow, Umbria, Italy (2022); and at the Joan Mitchell Center, New Orleans, LA (2017); amongst others. Waddell's work is in the collections of the Ackland Art Museum, Chapel Hill; Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, Bristol, UK; Brooklyn Museum; College of Wooster Art Museum; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville; Gibbes Museum of Art, Charleston; The Mint Museum, Charlotte; Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham; North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia; the Princeton University Art Museum; The Studio Museum in Harlem; and the Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro; amongst other institutional collections.