

REBECCA CAMACHO PRESENTS



Natani Notah
Normal Force

6 August through 3 September 2021
Open house reception on Friday 6 August, 12noon to 5pm

Rebecca Camacho Presents is pleased to announce an exhibition of ambitious new works by Bay Area artist Natani Notah. Exploring Native American identity as a Diné (Navajo) woman, Notah's interdisciplinary practice sits at the intersection of art, history and culture. Titled *Normal Force*, the show references Newton's third law - when two objects interact, they apply forces to each other of equal magnitude and opposite direction - as a point of entry to theorize the parallels of physical energy and power and how those pressures directly affect Native people.

The exhibition highlights Notah's mixed-media process, featuring a drawing from 2019, accompanied by a new series of soft sculptures, photographs, and video. Utilizing many traditional modes of making, Notah draws upon both intensely personal and universal elements to make work that has a strong presence within the space of fine art.

The female is a unifying factor throughout Notah's work and she often uses her own physicality as a benchmark. Sculptures relate to the dimensions of Notah's body and are akin to limbs and extensions swathed in secondhand clothing belonging to strangers and family members. The familiar yet abstract, disembodied yet independent forms are equally unsettling and enticing. They hint to various interpretations of "force," while also glittering with patches of appliqué beadwork meant to challenge preconceived narratives. The former is fully realized when sewn together with fabrics that have a history of being worn, thus reminding us to think about the role of human touch, mortality, and the passing of time.

Of quiet contemplation, the soft sculptures are accompanied by the striking presence of their photographic counterparts and a moving image. Importantly noting her physical connection to the sculptures she makes, Notah documents this relationship. In the photograph titled *There Are No Synonyms for Cradleboard*, a sculpture is tenderly wrapped in her arms. In another photograph titled *One Antonym of Catch is Release*, we see a second sculpture held up by an outstretched arm, as if it was a fisherman's catch of the day. In another room, a single video clip plays infinitely on a loop. We witness the largest sculpture being dragged along the ground, tasking us to reconsider the act of dragging and its many definitions. In all three gestures, normal force is being demonstrated, nurturing a more complex understanding of power, past and present.

Understood to be pushing a nuanced visual and intellectual dialogue forward, Notah's work asks us to consider how we interact with all of creation, animate and inanimate, while simultaneously presenting us with art objects that exist in direct defiance of colonial agendas that often pigeonhole Native people, artists, and their practices into positions of false inferiority.

Natani Notah (b. 1992) received her BFA in Fine Arts with a minor in Feminist, Gender and Sexuality Studies from Cornell University in 2014 and her MFA from Stanford University in 2018. Notah was recently included in the critically praised exhibitions *Native Feminisms* at apexart, New York, NY and *Material Intimacies* at NXTHVN, New Haven CT. Her work has been featured in *Art in America*, *Hyperallergic*, *Forbes*, and *Sculpture Magazine* and she has had artist residencies at the Vermont Studio Center, Grounds for Sculpture, Headlands Center for the Arts, and *This Will Take Time*, Oakland. Notah is currently a 2020-2021 Kala Art Institute Fellow and will mount solo exhibitions at various institutions in 2022.

Gallery hours: Friday 12noon to 5pm.
Monday through Thursday, weekends by appointment