

Images courtesy of Good Weather, North Little Rock

Exhibition Text:

You can't protect anyone in an arena.

Katniss Everdeen (2015)

Over the past two months of quarantine Isabelle Frances McGuire has logged each day as an embroidered garment: a calendar of time passed in self-isolation warranted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the circumstances, the process of making became therapeutic for the artist. The plush dolls—a badling of ducks which accompany the garments—became surrogates for intimacy. The gathering incited by the sculptural work *Digesting Duck Entry Level Position* (previously shown at From the Desk of Lucy Bull and an entry point to *P**** B**** ARENA*) became a bittersweet memory. And with multiple postponements of the exhibition, the artist prepared a statement, diaristic in nature, which emphatically lays out the vitalness of art and community to their existence.

Isabelle Frances McGuire (b. 1994 Austin, Texas) lives and works in Chicago. McGuire received a BFA from School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Recent solo and two-person exhibitions include *Digesting Duck Entry Level Position* at From the Desk of Lucy Bull (Los Angeles), *Just Models* at Sibling (Toronto), *Babies Born Without Brains* with New Works at Lagos (Mexico City), and *I'm A Cliché* at Prairie (Chicago). Their work has been in group exhibitions at in lieu (Los Angeles), Alyssa Davis Gallery (New York), and Gallery 400 (Chicago). McGuire participated in Alternative Worksite Artist-in-Residence Program (founded by Linda Burnham and supported by the Robert Overby Estate) in 2018 and LATITUDE Chicago Artist Residency in 2019, and they were awarded a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant from the COVID-19 Fund in 2020.

Through the displacement of meaning-generation, (Mike) Kelley implicates the viewer in an inter-relational network of emotional contracts underwritten by social expectation. He shows how the viewer's own identification and projection unwittingly reaffirm broader cultural conventions regarding interaction based on social and emotional conditions. This reaffirmation undermines our own autonomy.

Leigh Ledare (2013)

In this light, The Potato further underscores a crucial aspect of what we have come to call cuteness — the ability of the object to withstand the violence it's very passivity seems to solicit. One might call this the violence of domestication or tenderization.

Sianne Ngai (2005)

Pop is just taking the outside and putting it on the inside or taking the inside and putting it on the outside.

Andy Warhol (1966)

So I give you cuddly wittle sitting ducks with broken wittle wings
so I give you memes
so I give you quotes
so I give you the date cutified
and and and
my cute wittle shirts
and and and
skirts
so I give you cute fwiends as cute bwokeu cups
To S&M with the traumatic cuteness of the domestic.
Oh fuck me.
I literally have to wake up again tomorrow and everyday.

Stressful Leisure Limbo

Everyday, Everyday, Everyday.
God how disgusting,
“ Virgil Abloh ”
Everyday making the same thing over and over again
and I’m not the only one doing this.
I know you’re making bread, drawings, and postcards.
Ya, that’s domestic, ya that’s cute, ya that’s queer af.
This is art therapy and I need the pleasure of consuming.

Double tap this photo if crafting helps with your depression and anxiety.

This show is a simulation, a tableau, of an exhibition.
I’m not recommending that you attend.
*P**** B**** ARENA*
All I have now, just like before, is pop.
Pop is made by everyone I know online.
Art Star can’t get unemployment :/
Art Star by the Yeah Yeah Yeahs.

Making a show without an attendance is making photographs.
Relying on the viewers gorgingly muscled ability to read visual language on
tiny rectangle screens.
Relying on memes.
Relying on the grid.
I wanna get a real doll of you so I can cuddle it bc I’m so loneli and needi
I can’t sleep
*B*****, I live in Chicago.
I’ve already only seen your art online and there was a lot of it.
I already get to experience your shows by myself.

The arena - the blanket- the rectangle - the image

Really fucking sad there won't be a party.
I'm going to miss getting plastered in front of strangers.
Digesting Duck Entry Level Position
The original party girl
Is now serving no one
So she just pukes and and and pukes

TBH quar is making my head feel like it's about to POP off.
But damn B*****
my love for art has really been solidified during this whole thing.
I'm here for it forever.

Warm monkey
Wire monkey

I want to say thank you to the Foundation for Contemporary Arts for making this exhibition happen
I want to say thank you to my stimulus check for making this exhibition happen

Email me @ talk2me.dirtymusic@gmail.com if you've ever wanted to say hi. I need you to say hi.
I'm not looking to the future anymore.
We take this day by day.

POP POP POP
adapt mfer or die.
March 22, 2020,
March 23, 2020,
March 24, 2020,
March 25, 2020,
March 26, 2020,
March 27, 2020,
March 28, 2020,
March 29, 2020,
March 30, 2020,
March 31, 2020,
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May 1, 2020
May 2, 2020
May 3, 2020
May 4, 2020
May 5, 2020
May 6, 2020
May 7, 2020
May 8, 2020 (original show date)

Isabelle Frances McGuire (2020)