

## **More Than Nothing**

Kelly Lycan

November 5<sup>th</sup> to December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Five artists respond to *More Than Nothing*:

### **A Light Response**

Lucien Durey, Deboarah Edmeades, Justin Patterson,

Natalie Purschwitz and Marina Roy

November 26<sup>th</sup> to December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016

### **BAF**

108 East Broadway

Vancouver, BC

In **More Than Nothing**, a new installation work specifically conceived for the BAF after a ten-week residency, Kelly Lycan delves into the aesthetics of museum interiors, architecture, and display models, both past and present. In her research, Lycan photographs and collects images of display systems from museums worldwide. Her findings inventory the many plinths, shelves, and cases built specifically to showcase artworks and artifacts, but that often fade unnoticed into the background. The resulting exhibition stems from this study of museological display practices—subject matter which Lycan has engaged with in exhibitions at, Or Gallery, Presentation House Gallery, and Kamloops Art Gallery.

Referencing her archive of museum spaces and display cases, Lycan loosely recreates shelves and walls using drywall, and house paint in various shades of white—cheap commodities easily available at any hardware store, and common to both building sites and gallery spaces alike. Her use of these ordinary materials—indeed the same materials that make up the interior of BAF itself—refocuses the viewer's gaze on what is typically overlooked as extraneous information. Lycan appends and reconfigures the BAF's architectural and spatial layout with roughly cut and painted drywall placed in direct relationship with the gallery's existing walls. With its anti-monumental aesthetic, **More Than Nothing** muddles and blurs the boundaries of art and the white cube space of the gallery, seamlessly melding the two.

**More Than Nothing** encourages the viewer to look *at* ordinary objects instead of *through* them. Arguing for a shift towards a new materialism in his essay, "Thing Theory," scholar Bill Brown writes that we can better understand the potency of things by asking what are "the ideological and ideational effects of the material world and of transformations of it," as well as reflecting on "what work [things] perform." In this vein, we can consider how do display structures affect how we view artworks and how have these structures shaped exhibition practices? In her drywall fabrications of shelves and gallery walls, Lycan foregrounds their significant function within a history of art, exhibitions, and museum methodologies.

By highlighting the discrete display systems typically used to frame and present objects as *art*, Lycan bestows these humble structures with their own subtly powerful aura as artworks. In **More Than Nothing**, display shelves are reborn as minimalist sculpture and abstract painting, compositions and still lifes in themselves. Viewers are asked to imagine these objects' trajectory between various mediums and contexts: from exhibiting artworks in museums, to being photographed, to becoming the key components of a site-specific installation at BAF. How does their associated value shift and evolve as they move from one context to another, from the flatness of a photograph to the three dimensionality of an installation, from figurative to abstracted content? Finally, Lycan pushes this trajectory full circle by asking local artists Lucien Durey, Deborah Edmeades, Justin Patterson, Natalie Purschwitz, and Marina Roy to respond to her shelf sculptures, where her artworks may well become display systems once again.

### **About The Responding Artists:**

#### **Marina Roy**

Marina Roy is a Vancouver-based artist working across a variety of media including drawing, painting, sculpture, video, and animation. Her artwork investigates the grotesque, at the intersection of language, image, and materiality; her theoretical interests are largely psychoanalytic, biopolitical, and ecological. In 2001 she published *sign after the x(Arsenal/Artspeak)*, and she recently completed writing a book titled *queuejumping*. She is associate professor in visual art at the University of British Columbia.

#### **Deborah Edmeades**

Deborah Edmeades currently lives in Vancouver. Her work has been focused through a practice of performance that has continued at times outside of an artistic or academic context and into therapeutic and esoteric experiments. Recent interests include the histories of western mystical and esoteric practice and thought, their intertwinement with the history of the sciences and philosophical discourse and their somewhat embarrassing contemporary manifestation in the 'New Age'. Thankfully, embarrassment for Edmeades has been a long-time indicator of productive content and is often an ingredient of the work, which ranges between performance, the lens, object-making and drawing.

#### **Natalie Puschwitz**

Natalie Purschwitz is an artist and designer based in Vancouver, Canada. Her work seeks out spaces between art and design, performance and daily life. Her visual art practice is materially motivated and driven by curiosities in anthropology, archaeology, human/nature relationships, morphology and formal arrangement. Clothing is sometimes a starting point for her work. She is interested in how clothing functions as a language and a form of cultural production. Her work incorporates a range of media including sculptural installation, video, performance, photography and works on paper. She has a parallel practice designing costumes and sets for contemporary dance and theatre. Natalie grew up in a small town in the Canadian Rockies.

#### **Justin Patterson**

Justin Patterson lives and works in Vancouver, BC. His felt sculptures represent one part of multi-faceted studio practice. His collaboration with Stacey Watson (Calgary) called *Object Vocation* will be exhibited at the Art Gallery of Alberta as part of the Alberta Biennial in the spring 2017.

**Lucien Durey**

Born in Regina, Saskatchewan, Lucien Durey now lives and works in Vancouver, British Columbia. The variety of media approaches that constitute his work often begin with a performative engagement with found objects and ephemera. Recent exhibitions include *Swimming Pool Blue* (2016), Achterhaus, Hamburg; *Index 2016*, Gallery 295, Vancouver; and *Baba's House* (2015–16), a touring Dunlop Art Gallery, Regina, exhibition. He holds a BFA from Emily Carr University of Art + Design and an MFA from Simon Fraser University's School for the Contemporary Arts.