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RECKLESS LAW, SHAMELESS ORDER

An Intimate Experience of Incarceration

“Any community seriously concerned with its own freedom has to be concerned about other people’s freedom as well.” -- Assata Shakur, Assata: An Autobiography

When the unifying link that connects one to another is their visceral experiences under bondage, we have a problem. However, when those shared experiences ignite actions set to demystify the horrific practices and policies that have upheld the collective violence endured, there lies hope. The works exhibited in Reckless Law, Shameless Order interrupt the stigmatization of being alone while incarcerated and reveal how intricately carceral spaces are linked to and inform a lot of our contemporary life. This exhibition draws its focus and inspiration from intimate, transnational dialogues shared between each artist in the art-based workshop format. Through these conversations, the exhibiting artists learned how their experiences while incarcerated mirrored others’ experiences many miles away. This was their call to action—an action of care.

What I find most resonating about the assemblage of artworks in this exhibition is the vigor with which the materials converge to cool our most primal sensations as human beings, feelings. From a collaborative video installation comprised of all of the surveillance devices seen looming on a two-mile walk or a work that comments on

the weaponization of everyday objects by drawing each object in vibrant watercolors almost to baptize them anew. This exhibition hinges itself on the widely known mantra of "Where there are people, there is power", guided by the curatorial vision of Nasrin Navab in collaboration with Sarah Ross and Pablo Mendoza, Reckless Law, Shameless Order offers us the question of "what can be offered to a world on fire?". Fire is a poetic (yet literal) metaphor for many things including; surveillance, capitalism, imperialism, and scarcity to name a few. This exhibition makes a point to address that the fire is not contained to one side of the wall and that through the brave sensations of vulnerability, compassion, and care, artistic interventions can begin to give light to the destructive impact that carceral punishments have on our everyday lives.

Artists Vincent Robinson, Kenneth Norton, Monica Cosby, Marilyn Mulero, Ana Navarro, Imran Mohammad, Pablo Mendoza, Sarah Ross, Nasrin Navab, and Faranak Miraftab share a robust collection of artworks in this exhibition that are deeply researched, intimately assembled, and simplistically portrayed. Each artist draws from a basin of emotions, some more intense than others, but all hoping to strike a familiar cord with every interaction. The artists in this exhibition take on the huge task of enveloping viewers in the commonality of their experiences locked away in carceral sites.

-- Isra Rene, 2024

Image Credits:
front, Vincent Robinson, *A Good Hair Tool*, 2021; above, Nasrin Navab, detail of work featuring contributions by Pablo Mendoza, Lauren Stumblingbear, *Mirror of Time*, 2021.

IN MEMORY:

The first iteration of this exhibition included artist Lauren Stumblingbear. Lauren passed away in 2022. Her individual work could not be aquired to show in this exhibition, but she contributed to collaborative pieces on display here. Her love for art, family and friends will not be forgotten.

THANK YOU:

Nasrin Navab for organizing workshops in 2021 that brought the artists and this exhibition together.
Ryan Griffis, Nahid Navab. Mira Simonton-Chao and Joe Sorrentino for their expert installation support.
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A Road Together

THE FIELD FOUNDATION OF ILLINOIS

arts work fund
for organizational development

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RECKLESS LAW, SHAMEFUL ORDER

June 21 - September 20, 2024

GALLERY HOURS:
12-5pm, Thursday-Saturday
or by appointment

WALLS TURNED SIDEWAYS
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