



Swamp Salad

An exhibition by Hannah Levy
January 21 - March 11, 2018

A foreign object lodges itself inside, and the process begins again. Coat after coat of pink saliva is applied like paint until the irritant is something else entirely--a pearl. Like the seeds maturing in the belly of a fruit, or fingernails extending from a hand, hardness grows out of repeated softness. This material paradox serves as an entrypoint for Levy's first presentation at Clearing, especially as it applies to the pearl, a historical commodity that continues to be associated with luxury despite its mass production.

Levy's exhibition orients itself around a new video where manicured nails rifle through the greying bellies of giant oysters extracting pearls one at a time from the watery flesh. The audience to this almost pornographic dissection includes a set of three, low-slung lounge chairs loosely based on a drawing by the late French designer and architect Charlotte Perriand. Too short to see the screen, Levy's stretched silicone and metal skeletons just bask in its sinister glow. They too are dotted with pearls--trafficking in the same suburban clichés: the choked neck of a housewife, the country club lawn chair, the immaculate countertop.

As in past bodies of work, Levy employs sculptural strategies--scale, process and context--to highlight the way the objects we live with and spaces we live in betray values beyond their function. By exacerbating the corporeal qualities of modern materials (peachy silicon slabs, veiny alabaster, polished steel) and the all-too-familiar ergonomic shapes and strategies of contemporary design, Levy questions the specious impulse to conflate the progressive, the clean and the desirable with whiteness.

Hannah Levy (b. 1991 in New York, USA) lives and works in New York. She received her MFA from Städelschule, Frankfurt, DE, in 2015. Her work has been exhibited at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, DK; MoMA PS1, New York, USA; Palais de Tokyo, Paris, FR; Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, DE; Fondazione Baruchello, Rome, IT; White Flag Library, St. Louis, USA and Museum Für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, DE.

Hannah Levy's work is part of the collections of the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, DK and the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, AU.