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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Florencia Escudero

Phygitalia

Rachel Uffner Gallery: April 26 - June 29, 2024

Kristen Lorello: April 26 - June 8, 2024

Opening Reception: Friday, April 26, 6 - 8pm

Kristen Lorello and Rachel Uffner Gallery are thrilled to present a two-venue solo exhibition of new sculptures by Florencia Escudero. Works in a range of scales and modes of display will be installed within the intimate rooms of Lorello's gallery, situated on the fifth floor of a nineteenth-century townhouse on the upper east side, and the contemporary, sky-lit upstairs gallery of Rachel Uffner Gallery on the lower east side. An opening reception will take place at Rachel Uffner Gallery on Friday, April 26th from 6-8pm.

Phygitalia is Escudero's third solo exhibition. The artist is known for her mind-spinning, visually-provocative soft sculptures that teeter on the animate. She combines research of feminist theory and digital culture, with innovative approaches to drawing, printing, and casting. Taking inspiration from economies surrounding women's bodies, such as fashion and fetish objects, Escudero heightens the interplay between the digital and physical in her new works. Hence the title of the exhibition, *Phygitalia*, a portmanteau of the artist's creation that combines the marketing term 'phygital,' with 'talia,' to conjure the notion of a blurred experience of digital, physical, and body. Real life TikTok and Instagram personalities such as the viral NPC character Pinkydoll now mimic the look, cadence, and stuttering glitches of an AI robot in real time. This warped distinction between the real and artificial finds a place in Escudero's sculptural visions. Her multi-part installation, *Daphne*, interprets the mythological story of Daphne's escape from Apollo as two legs, spliced together, cut into chunks of flower-speckled musculature, and coated with a transparent sheen. In a free standing oversized vase, samples of makeup foundation digitally printed onto satin are patches of sand that lead to a lonesome cluster of green palm trees. Skin begs for moisturize like parched plants in a desert.

Working in the genre of sculpture, Escudero is equally invested in questions surrounding photography, technology, and printing. She creates each work from a core of shaped upholstery foam covered with fabrics that are sewn together by hand. Digitally combining her own photography with found open source images, Escudero develops sprawling photomontages that are then printed onto satin. The silky fabric is then stitched together with other soft materials and further embellished by silk-screening and drawing. Working with resin, Escudero adds charm-like cast elements that reveal objects trapped within them, while stylized metal stands and holders lend the sculptures a fierce effect.

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Florencia Escudero (b. 1987, Singapore) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She received a BFA in Fine Arts in 2010 from the School of Visual Arts, New York, NY, and an MFA in Sculpture from the Yale University School of Art, New Haven, CT in 2012. Group exhibitions include *52 Artists: Revisiting a Feminist Milestone*, organized by Amy Smith-Stewart and Alexandra Schwartz, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT, 2022, *Theorem x, Theorem y* at Rachel Uffner and Mrs., 2021, and *Love Letter to a Nightmare*, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, NY, 2020. Solo exhibitions include *Florencia Escudero*, Kristen Lorello, New York, NY, 2019, and *Florencia Escudero: Canciones en la Colmena*, Kristen Lorello, New York, NY, 2021. Her work has been reviewed in *The Brooklyn Rail* and *Cultured Magazine*, and discussed in *LatinX Spaces*, *Remezcla*, and *The Art Newspaper*, among other publications. Escudero is a co-founder of the independent publication *Precog*, which investigates themes of feminism, technology, cyber culture, and techno plastics in contemporary art.

Image: Florencia Escudero, *Echo*, 2022, digitally printed satin and spandex hand-sewn over upholstery foam, resin cast with watches, chains, glitter, and steel

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