



Ad Minoliti. *Vintage*, 2019. From series of three inkjet prints on stretched canvas. Courtesy of the artist.

Heather Rowe. *Her Entity (Captured)*, 2018. Found frames, one-way mirror, grey mirror, fabric, paint. Courtesy of the artist.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## CONSTRUCTION HOUSE: AD MINOLITI & HEATHER ROWE

Hunt-Cavanagh Gallery, Hunt-Cavanagh Hall

December 4, 2019 - March 1, 2020

Artist Talk and Public Reception:

February 26, 2020, 5 – 7pm

Providence College Galleries (PC–G) continues its Beyond Bauhaus program, a more than yearlong series of exhibitions, publications and commissioned installations featuring contemporary artists whose studio practices register with the history and concerns of Bauhaus (1919-1933), the German art school so influential on modern art, architecture, craft, design and education.

On view beginning December 4, 2019, *Construction House* is a two-person exhibition featuring Heather Rowe and Ad Minoliti, artists whose work often formally connects to and, in some cases, homages International Style architecture and various modern design movements. With new works created for this exhibition, however, the two artists collectively suggest how some of the signature aspects of modernist architecture and design, such as structure, order, and light, possess the potential to become hierarchical, exclusionary, or even threatening. New York City and Providence-based artist Heather Rowe intensifies the portentousness of memory mixed with modernist spaces, while Paris and Buenos Aires artist Ad Minoliti neutralizes the negative or oppressive characteristics of modern design.

Heather Rowe works at the intersection of architecture, sculpture and installation. She is interested in how the physical and psychological experience of the built environment connects to memory and illusion. Her mixed-media installations mine the practical and fantastical aspects of architectural history, consisting of familiar building materials, mirrors, nods to modernist principles and the history of decoration, often conflated with narrative or filmic references. Despite the implied sturdiness of the wood, metal and right angles that comprise most of her three-dimensional works, underpinning Rowe's entire oeuvre is a notion of fragility that presents a personal negotiation with implied danger or theatrical threats.

The exhibition opens with Rowe's installation-based transformation of the essentials—mass-produced designed objects and construction materials like steel, aluminum, glass and wood—of International Style architecture and its successors to visually retell the story of the haunting of a Los Angeles woman in the 1970s by an invisible and often times violent presence. In the mid 1970s, research associates from UCLA's former parapsychology laboratory spent several nights at the woman's home where they captured two photographic images revealing arcs of light in the woman's living room. In a video projection incorporated into the installation, Rowe examines the scenario depicted in the photographs by staging a domestic set rigged with lighting effects. She does not attempt to conceal the mechanisms behind the installation's special effects, nor behind the infrastructure of the set, exploring both the (im)possibility of the apparition's existence and the (im)perceptibility of the given site. By siting and exploring this story within a built environment that alludes to the lackluster, somewhat hodge-podge late modern style of the 1970s, the artist demonstrates how the illusory qualities of simple design espoused within all modern architecture manifestos can over time become compromised, strange and cruel.

Ad Minoliti uses feminist and queer theory to generate different interpretations of painting, design, architecture, art history and visual language. Ranging from paintings and digital prints to experimental installations, their work centers around geometry and abstraction in ways that illustrate how gender theory connects to visual culture, lifestyle and environmental design—think car magazines written just for men or home decorating guides designed just for women. Pictorial languages of found imagery is transformed into collage and other mixed-media forms. His resulting projects propose designs and spaces that are non-binary alternatives to contemporary social hierarchies, specifically those based on gender roles, sexuality and age.

Set back from Rowe's installation, is "Vintage," a trio of giant digital collages printed on canvas and stretched liked paintings that Minoliti created specially for *Construction House*. The impetus for this series comes out of a long-term examination of the myriad ways modern design is fetishized in home décor. In her research, which involves visually analyzing a range of source material from vintage illustrations and photographs in magazines to digitally rendered rooms littering the Internet, the artist notes how so-called design solutions originally developed by figures in or adjacent to the Bauhaus perpetuate unnecessary divisions. These separations—which are at once physical and social, literal and figurative—are based on culturally constructed difference, such as age, gender, sex, race, class and more. But Minoliti isn't deterred; for this series they mix and modify such imagery to make Clip-art-esque collages featuring two environments and one decorator's mood board devoid of artificial limitations of fixed identity and space. Replete with retro kittens and color palettes original to early modern art movements but especially popular in the radical feminist eras of the late 1960s and 70s, the series makes modern design and modernist aesthetics in general into a playful, vibrant and welcoming backdrop for the ambiguities of life and culture.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Ad Minoliti splits their time between Berlin and Buenos Aires. They have exhibited in museums and galleries around the world, most recently including solo and two-person shows at Museum of Modern Art Buenos Aires, Argentina; Galerie Crèvecoeur, Paris, France; Nogueras Blanchard Gallery, Barcelona, Spain; Galería Agustina Ferrera, Mexico City, Mexico; and Peres Projects, Berlin, Germany, among others. As an artist-in-residence, she created and launched The Feminist School of Painting at Kadist Foundation, San Francisco, and he participated in the Bienal del Mercosur in Porto Alegre, Brazil; the Aichi Triennale, Japan; Front Triennial, Cleveland; and the 2019 Venice Biennale, Italy. They were an agent at the Artistic Investigation Center of Argentina since 2009, when they also founded the group PintorAs, a feminist collective of Argentinian painters. In 2020, she will launch exhibitions at MASS MoCA, North Adams, Massachusetts; Contemporary Art Museum, Houston; and Kunsthalle Lisbon, Portugal. He earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the National Academy of Fine Arts, Pueyrredón, Argentina.

Heather Rowe lives in New York and teaches in Providence. Her recent projects include a large-scale solo outdoor project at Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City, New York; a solo exhibition at James Cohan Gallery, New York; in *Performing the Grid* at Otis College of Art and Design's Ben Maltz Gallery; in "Third Girl" at Lucien Terras, New York; and a two-person show with Kate Gilmore titled "Only in Your Way" at DiverseWorks, Houston. She has also exhibited in solo and group exhibitions at numerous galleries and museums, including PS1/MoMA, Long Island City, New York; the Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, Indiana; the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio; UMMA/University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Galerie Zink, Berlin, Germany; D'Amelio Terras, New York; Michael Benevento Gallery, Los Angeles; Ballroom Marfa, Texas; Andrea Rosen, New York; White Columns, New York; and Artists Space, New York. In 2008, her work was featured in the Whitney Biennial. Rowe holds a Master of Fine Arts from Columbia University, New York.

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