



american medium
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While Removing the Garbage or Paying the Cleaner

André Filipek
Cole Lu

Curated by Eileen Isagon Skyers

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american medium is proud to present *While Removing the Garbage or Paying the Cleaner*, a two-person exhibition with work by André Filipek and Cole Lu. In the exhibition, the two artists look to mechanisms of resilience as means to both segment and interpret the intricacies of displacement.

Filipek questions the efficacy of representation and economic propaganda in a Mexican culture whose history is laden with capital-driven white supremacy. His sculptures take the form of Rotoplas water storage containers. Often found on the rooftops of Mexican residences, these containers are a point of contention in ongoing debates about municipal potable water systems, and the presence of branded water in the Mexican market. Plump dogs bear the weight of these containers on their backs, recalling the effigy vessels of Aztec societies in the region of Colima—the place of origin of the artists' family. Filipek combines additive processes of 3D printing and sculpture to create contemporary mourning symbols of infrastructure blighted by colonization. Conversely, Lu's work is a maelstrom of liminal identities that articulate themselves in the form of sculptural compositions. At the material level, silicone, concrete, and stainless steel are wrought by hand to create bodily and non-bodily elements: a half-drowned Beast informs a narrative of queerness, Western folklore, and alienation, while a low-relief sculpture coated in silicone reevaluates mythologies of monstrosity and prosthesis. These sculptural forms place water at

their center: water acts as the frontier, barrier, and purifier through which all things must pass. Rather than uphold Western contemporary culture as a marker from which to translate, mediate, and sublimate, both Lu and Filipek explore the conceptual legacies inherited from, and very much still alive in, narratives of immigration.

André Filipek (b. 1992) is an artist based in Brooklyn, NY. His work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, including recent solo presentations at, 77 Mulberry (New York), JACE (Los Angeles), 100% Gallery (San Francisco), Produce Model (Chicago), Amor Tlalpan (Mexico City), Yeah Maybe (Minneapolis), and group exhibitions at Alyssa Davis Gallery (New York), Freight Gallery (San Antonio) and Stadelschule (Frankfurt).

Cole Lu (b. Taipei) is an artist, curator and writer based in New York. Her work has been exhibited in Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, Pulitzer Arts Foundation, ICA Philadelphia, The Wrong Biennale, LACE (Los Angeles), Vox Populi (Philadelphia), I Never Read (Basel), FILE (São Paulo), K-Gold Temporary Gallery (Lesvos) and Trestle Projects (Brooklyn). Her Risograph publication, Smells Like Content (Endless Editions), is in the artists' book collection of MoMA Library (New York).

Eileen Isagon Skyers is an artist, writer and curator. She has worked with contemporary art and non-profit arts organizations including The Whitney Museum, Rhizome, the New Museum, the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, and the Digital Museum of Digital Art (DiMoDA). Her moving image work has been exhibited nationally and internationally in the U.S., U.K., France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Mexico. Her first book, Vanishing Acts, was published by LINK Editions (Brescia, Italy) in 2015, and her writing has been published in NATASHA, Wreath, Glass Press of the Future, Web Safe 2k16, Printed Web, and New World UNLTD, among others. Skyers holds a BA in Philosophy and a BFA in Studio Art from the University of South Florida (Tampa, FL) and an MA in Critical Studies at Pacific Northwest College of Art, (Portland, OR).