

Zachary Fabri: *Memory Foam* Mentor: American Artist April 9th - May 12th, 2022

Opening Reception
Saturday, April 9th, 6-8pm

"To tell American history is to tell a ghost story. And to speak of the American present is to speak of a landscape haunted by the afterlives of violence..."

- Excerpt from "Beloved Gestures" by Zoë Hopkins, the catalogue essay for *Memory Foam* by Zachary Fabri



Zachary Fabri, video still from *Mourning Stutter*, 2017-2022. Single channel video with sound.

Memory Foam is a solo exhibition by **Zachary Fabri**, with curatorial mentorship from **American Artist**. The exhibition expands upon Fabri's ongoing project *Mourning Stutter*, initiated in 2017. Informed by the successive murders of Black people by police officers, Fabri explores the ways in which trauma is stored in the body - how it is remembered or forgotten. Through video, photographs, sound, text, and sculpture, he reclaims the freedom to access and hold public space without fear, but also asserts the necessity to imagine, build, and experience joy freely in the public sphere.

Initially conceived of as a site-specific performance commissioned for the Barnes Foundation, *Mourning Stutter* began with a series of actions throughout Philadelphia's Center City. These actions, performed along a predetermined route, responded to and were choreographed by the architecture and urban design of each location, as Fabri explored unintentional spatial relationships between body and site. The performance is adapted by the artist into a nine-minute video (*Mourning Stutter*) presented as part of this exhibition at CUE, with a score that serves as an active call and response to Fabri's movements within this architectural environment. In a series of black and white photographs (*Duppy*), Fabri plays with the spectacle of his body in these public spaces, accentuating his presence and absence for the camera and the passerby.

At CUE, Fabri continues the project with two new works. *We Need Some Kind of Tomorrow* is a text-based piece that references Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, and is made from the same black chiffon that the artist wears in his *Mourning Stutter* performance. *The Memory Foam of George Floyd* is a sculptural work made from memory foam that bears the permanent impression of a body, the approximate shape and size of the body of George Floyd as he was held to the ground with a knee on his neck.

In *Memory Foam*, Zachary Fabri brings together all of these works to explore the relationship between presence and absence, public space, embodied trauma, violence, memory, and freedom. As mentor American Artist reflects in their essay that accompanies the exhibition, "In the wake of a compounded sense of defeat, Fabri performs the feeling of getting up with the small breath you have remaining. Of being knocked back down. But getting up. Again. In mourning. Stuttering. Fabri shows us this possibility, and makes a life for us around it."

The exhibition is accompanied by a 32-page color catalogue, with texts by Zachary Fabri, American Artist, and Zoë Hopkins. The catalogue is available to download online, and a print version is available free of charge to gallery visitors.

Zachary Fabri is an interdisciplinary artist engaged in lens-based media, language systems, and public space, often complicating the boundaries of studio research and social practice. This context specificity often yields work that includes design, drawing, photography, video, and installation. Awards include The Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award, the Franklin Furnace Fund for Performance Art, the New York Foundation for the Arts fellowship, and the BRIC Colene Brown Art Prize. Fabri's work has been exhibited at Art in General, The Studio Museum in Harlem, El Museo del Barrio, The Walker Art Center, The Brooklyn Museum, The Barnes Foundation, and Performa. He has collaborated on projects at the Museum of Modern Art, the Sharjah Biennial, and Pace gallery. In 2021, he exhibited at the Ludwig Museum in Budapest, Hungary and completed a solo project at Recess Art in Brooklyn, NY. Fabri lives and works in Brooklyn.

American Artist makes thought experiments that mine the history of technology, race, and knowledge production, beginning with their legal name change in 2013. Their artwork primarily takes the form of sculpture, software, and video. Artist is a 2022 Creative Capital and United States Artists grantee, and a recipient of the 2021 LACMA Art & Tech Lab Grant. They have exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art; MoMA PS1; The Studio Museum in Harlem; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; Kunsthalle Basel (Switzerland); and Nam June Paik Center, Seoul. They have had solo museum exhibitions at the Queens Museum in New York and the Museum of the African Diaspora in California. Their work has been featured in The New York Times, Artforum, and Huffington Post. Artist is a part-time faculty member at Parsons, NYU and UCLA and a co-director of the School for Poetic Computation.



Zachary Fabri, video still from *Mourning Stutter*, 2017-2022. Single channel video with sound.

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