

MIT List Visual Arts Center

Press Release

Media Contact:

Mark Linga
mlinga@mit.edu
617.452.3586

listart.mit.edu

Carissa Rodriguez: The Maid

On View: May 18–July 29, 2018

Opening Reception: May 17, 6–8 PM

Cambridge, MA, April 17, 2018—The MIT List Visual Arts Center is pleased to present *Carissa Rodriguez: The Maid*. New York City-based artist Carissa Rodriguez examines the material and social conditions in which art is produced and reveals how the canonical figure of the artist is reflected in—and reproduced by—the products of her labor. Rodriguez's solo exhibition, which premiered at SculptureCenter in January, features a newly commissioned video work titled *The Maid* (2018).

The Maid follows a selection of American artist Sherrie Levine's *Newborn* sculptures throughout the course of a day in various residences, private and institutional, from New York to Los Angeles. Levine made the works in crystal and black cast glass in the early 1990s, molding them after Constantin Brancusi's marble and bronze sculptures of the same name from 1915 and 1920. By featuring not only Levine's sculptures, already appropriations of another artist's work, but also capturing their contemporary environments, Rodriguez engages the conditions and settings in which art circulates, proposing that the futures of artworks are inherently speculative.

Taking its title from a 1913 short story by Robert Walser about a devoted maid searching for a lost child who has been put under her care, the film similarly follows its subject toward a resolution that is more cyclical than gratifying. After searching around the world for the child for over twenty years, the maid in Walser's story finally finds her in Paris—and immediately dies from joy. The enigmatic story becomes a parable that frames the exhibition, as it tackles the complexity of care-based relationships forged through time, and follows Rodriguez' ongoing artistic exploration of subjecthood.

Engaging the discourse of sculpture through the tools of cinema, *The Maid* follows the lives of “related” artworks and recounts the conditional relationships between artist, artwork, and third-party agents (institution, caregiver, surrogate) in familial terms. Through this work, Rodriguez investigates how techniques of modern reproduction—both artistic and biological—are organized around property and kinship structures that are mediated through technology and the law.



Carissa Rodriguez (born 1970 in New York City; lives and works in New York City) has exhibited in New York and internationally since the mid-1990s. Recent solo exhibitions include the CCA Wattis Institute, San Francisco (2016); Front Desk Apparatus, New York (2013); and Karma International, Zurich (2012).

Carissa Rodriguez: The Maid is presented in collaboration with SculptureCenter, New York, and curated by Ruba Katrib. The Cambridge presentation is organized by Henriette Huldich, Director of Exhibitions & Curator, MIT List Visual Arts Center. The video commission, *The Maid*, is underwritten by Valeria Napoleone XX SculptureCenter.

Exhibitions at the List Center are made possible with the support of Fotene Demoulas & Tom Coté, Audrey & James Foster, Jane & Neil Pappalardo, Cynthia & John Reed, and Terry & Rick Stone. In-kind media sponsorship provided by 90.9 WBUR.

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