

## SARAH ZAPATA AND LJ ROBERTS TO CREATE NEW WORK LIVE IN MAD'S GALLERIES AS PART OF NEW EXHIBITION

*Studio Views: Craft in the Expanded Field, Cycle 1*  
August 22, 2017 – October 15, 2017



Left: Sarah Zapata, installation view of *If I Could* (2017), courtesy Deli Gallery. Right: LJ Roberts, photograph of van interior, with the artist's dogs; part of research for *VanDykesTransVanTransDykesTransAmTransGrandmxDykesVanDamDentalDamDamn* (2015).

New York, NY (August 14, 2017) – On view August 22 through October 15, the first cycle of *Studio Views: Craft in the Expanded Field* features two alumni of MAD's Artist Studios Program at work in the Museum's third-floor galleries on large-scale and immersive textile installations for this innovative and evolving exhibition. Working from a queer perspective to subvert and expand traditional notions of craft practice, LJ Roberts and Sarah Zapata will complete work on ambitious new projects that rethink community histories and legacies in full view of the public during their exhibition-situated micro-residencies.

As artistic practices become increasingly interdisciplinary, participatory, and process-oriented, museum exhibition formats must adapt to support the new ways in which artists are producing and presenting artwork. With *Studio Views*, MAD seeks to examine craft-based studio practices in an expanded, contemporary, and interdisciplinary landscape as a way to think critically about the field today. The exhibition is an extension of MAD's Artist Studios Program, which likewise embraces the qualities of adaptation and the spontaneity of current studio practices, inviting artists and designers to engage with visitors while at work in galleries on the Museum's sixth

floor. Founded in 2008, the program has invested in supporting the careers of nearly 150 working artists.

“We’re approaching both the sixty-year anniversary of the Museum and the ten-year anniversary of the Artist Studios Program, marking an incredible milestone in MAD’s history,” said Cathleen Lewis, Vice President of Education and Programs. “*Studio Views* represents this pivotal moment in that it so precisely demonstrates the Museum’s appreciation for and commitment to demystifying the creative process through intimate conversation and demonstration. It confirms our belief in the power of art to transform lives.”

“We hope that people who come and experience the exhibition will be moved to think about the studios afforded to working artists in New York City, and how museums can better encourage those practices that require the kind of space, time, and resources that cultural institutions are best equipped to provide,” said Danny Orendorff, Manager of Public and Community Engagement Programs and a co-curator of *Studio Views*.

Carli Beseau, Manager of Artist Studios and Docent Programs and co-curator of *Studio Views*, added, “We wanted to support the creation of work that embraces innovative approaches to using critically relevant craft techniques.”

Alongside the gallery-situated studios will be a Process Lounge featuring small displays of video, ephemera, research materials, drawings, and studio experiments, which aim to provide the public with a deeper view into the process and transdisciplinary interests of each artist. *Studio Views* also features the Point of View (POV) Gallery, co-curated by the artists, who draw artwork and supporting materials from MAD’s permanent collection in order to contextualize their work within the history of experimental, forward-thinking studio-craft practices from the 1930s to the present. The POV Gallery highlights innovators who, like the contemporary artists creating new work at MAD, have expanded the field of craft and directly influenced the work of the featured artists.

Together, the studios, lounge, and gallery aim to offer visitors a more in-depth, personal, and behind-the-scenes look at the ways contemporary artists (and their predecessors) have used craft techniques to engage in critical conversations about identity, creative practice, and the effects of historical influence on increasingly hard to categorize forms of artistic expression.

**LJ Roberts** approaches working in textiles with political urgency. They are interested in materialities that mark political histories and enable future speculations. The promises and problematics of queer and alternative kinship structures, nomadism, landlessness, and concepts of time inform their current explorations. Roberts’ work has been shown at venues including the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Brooklyn Museum, the Orange County Museum of Art, the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art, the Powerhouse Museum, the Oakland

Museum of California, the DePaul Art Museum, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, where their work is in the permanent collection. Roberts is a past recipient of the White House Champions of Change Award for LGBTQ artists, a MacDowell Colony fellowship, the Fountainhead Fellowship, and residencies at Ox-Bow School of Art, ACRE, and the Bag Factory in Johannesburg, South Africa. Roberts was an artist-in-residence at the Museum of Arts and Design in 2009.

**Sarah Zapata** uses materials that are common: yarn, ubiquitous objects, fabrics, paper, the kitchen sink. As a woman employing traditional craft techniques, Zapata appropriates value within processes and materials. By making work with meditative, mechanical means, she produces pieces that are time-consuming and labor-intensive, dealing with imagery of the feminine, the fetishized, and the handmade. Her work has been exhibited at El Museo del Barrio, the New Museum, LA><ART, Deli Gallery, Chamber, and Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center. Zapata has also completed residencies at MASS MoCA, A-Z West, and Wave Hill, and is the recent recipient of an NFA Project Grant from the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures. Zapata was an artist-in-residence at the Museum of Arts and Design in 2016.

Cycle 2 of *Studio Views: Craft in the Expanded Field*, featuring Xenobia Bailey and Maria Hupfield, will run October 20 through December 17.

*Studio Views* is co-curated by Carli Beseau, Manager of Artist Studios and Docent Programs, and Danny Orendorff, Manager of Public and Community Engagement Programs.

Leading support for *Studio Views: Craft in the Expanded Field* is provided by Marcia and Alan Docter. MAD also thanks Marcia Docter for serving as Trustee Chair for the exhibition.

## **ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN**

The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) champions contemporary makers across creative fields and presents the work of artists, designers, and artisans who apply the highest level of ingenuity and skill. Since the Museum's founding in 1956 by philanthropist and visionary Aileen Osborn Webb, MAD has celebrated all facets of making and the creative processes by which materials are transformed, from traditional techniques to cutting-edge technologies. Today, the Museum's curatorial program builds upon a rich history of exhibitions that emphasize a cross-disciplinary approach to art and design, and reveals the workmanship behind the objects and environments that shape our everyday lives. MAD provides an international platform for practitioners who are influencing the direction of cultural production and driving twenty-first-century innovation, and fosters a participatory setting for visitors to have direct encounters with skilled making and compelling works of art and design.

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