

LA HUERTA

GARGOYLES

Ling-lin Ku & R. Eric McMaster

Curated by Allison Malinsky

November 24 – December 20, 2022

Opening Reception: Thursday, November 24th, 17:00 – 21:00

Vermut Friday, November 25th, 17:00 – 21:00

Saturday, November 26th, 12:00 – 20:00

LA HUERTA is pleased to present *Gargoyles*, the two-person exhibition with internationally based artists Ling-lin Ku and R. Eric McMaster in Barcelona. The artists will be present for the opening reception at the La Mecánica space on Carrer del Congost 13, L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Barcelona, on Thursday, November 24th from 17:00 – 21:00, as well as during the events on Friday and Saturday, all part of Setmana de L'Art de Catalunya 2022. Thereafter, the exhibition is open by appointment only through December 20, 2022.

Working in tandem, Ling-lin Ku (Taiwan) and R. Eric McMaster (North America), create tangible, almost toylike in size, architectural elements stemming from reimagined workings of a city's innards. Sculptural objects in bronze, ceramic, plexiglass, and other materials each contain built-in sound pieces, accompanied by a video work. The artists' material centric infrastructures embody humor, a lightness to natural aquatic problems a city systematically tries to contain.

This multimedia exhibition focuses on the connection between decorative myths and the utile purpose of city installation systems. The fun and appeal lie in the object's inventive details; exquisitely hand built sculptures of aquatic forms and references which emit transitory sounds water could make on its journey through the interiors of a city on its way out to sea.

The works foster a building narrative, water flow comes first going down the drains, and from the perceived safety of our homes, through a window, we see the streets fill. Gargoyles were thought to keep evil spirits away, a hopeful credence to counter real intertwined infrastructure and bureaucracy. What if there are no wave breakers, how do we climb out of the coming deep water, what shape does the water take and how is it measured, removed; Ku and McMaster respond with their collaborative character and humor.

Ku and McMaster's water line marker appears to have its own way of escape with its dazzling bronze legs. Nature needs no assistance. The hanging bronze mobile drain chain suggests we simply pull the plug and the water drains out, we also have the option to collectively sip our way through with the bronze bendy straws. The floatie and wave breakers are comical in their miniature scale, more attuned to children's building blocks, emphasizing that scale is everything. The pores of our shores and homes become entry points as a cartoon splat of water around a window while that same plexi puddle shape forms the raising coastal waterline.

The exhibited work summons other visual artists past and current such as, Jean Arp, Rube Goldberg, Tim Hawkinson, and musician Lowell Liebermann to join the conversation around Gargoyles; concerning meditations on nature, myth, interests in systemization, shape and movement, echoing sounds, and amusing ways for us to contain and maneuver through shared waters.

Gargoyles invite us to look up at their heightened mythic animal form and gaze, we can do it right here in Barcelona at the cathedral, where medieval decoration stares back at us, gullets alerting us to their former legends. In cities, when the drainage fails, we can see how excess rain fills the block corners in New York City, or the tree beds here in Barcelona. Petrichor, the earthly scent from first rain could be a deluge notice. There is a communion of feelings and senses that Ku and McMaster activate with the parts and whole of this work. We must consider that "art can train the senses and, in a way, decide how nature appears to our vision."¹

Curatorial text: Allison Malinsky

¹ William Gaunt, *The Observer's Book of Painting and Graphic Art* (London & New York: Frederick Warne & Co. Ltd./ Inc., 1964)

Ling-Lin Ku and **R. Eric McMaster** are a masterful collaborative team with their combined talents and cumulative technical and exhibition experience. Ling-lin Ku's studio is a playground where she uses digital data and tangible materials to playfully question the physical world through digital fabrication and sculpture while R. Eric McMaster builds complex sculptures, often upending perceptions and using all the viewers' senses. He does this by creating composed soundscapes for his installations, as well as video, performances, and installations. Both artists use daily references, reimagining our relationships to the known object that often slip in and out of art categorization.

Ku and McMaster have exhibited their work internationally at institutions such as; Hiroshima MOCA, Blanton Museum of Art, The Contemporary Austin, Atelier 11, Paris, Annmarie Sculpture Garden and Art Center, Maryland, the Slocomb Gallery, Johnson City, Tennessee, The Contemporary, San Antonio, Texas, Locust Projects, Miami, Vox Populi, Philadelphia, Antenna Gallery in New Orleans, and the Lawndale Art Center, Houston, among other exhibitions in cities ranging from Salzburg to South Gimpo, Korea.

Their grants and residencies include widely recognized international and national awards such as; the Seebacher Prize in Fine Arts awarded from the American Austrian Foundation, the Umlauf Expanded Prize, the Houston Artadia Fellow, Honorable Mention of Innovative Award by International Sculpture Center, Virginia Museum of Fine Art Fellowship, a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant, and numerous international residencies including Vermont Studio Center, OxBow, Penland, 18 Street Arts Center, LA, and Helene Wurlitzer Foundation, Taos, New Mexico, to name a few.

Ling-lin Ku received her MFA from University of Texas at Austin and BFA from Virginia Commonwealth University. She is currently a faculty member at Carnegie Mellon University where she is an assistant professor at the school of art. R. Eric McMaster received his MFA from Arizona State University and BFA from Pennsylvania State University. He is an Austin-based artist and Associate Professor of Practice Studio Art: Sculpture & Extended Media at The University of Texas at Austin, Department of Art & Art History.

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A special thank you to

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We are grateful to the **Galeries d'Art de Catalunya (GAC)** for including us as a collaborator during **Setmana de L'Art de Catalunya 2022**.

Art **Catalunya**

LA HUERTA is a contemporary art project initiated to amplify the presence of international artists in Barcelona. Founded by Allison Malinsky, the artist-run gallery is in the process of applying for its non-profit status.

For more information or images, please contact:

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