

INDIA LAWRENCE

**Swoon Room**

Sep 5 - Oct 24 2015

We are pleased to announce "Swoon Room," the first solo show of Los Angeles-based artist India Lawrence with Ginerva Gambino.

For this show, Lawrence created three sculptures that are reminiscent of clothes or items potentially worn on or draped around a body: an oversized pair of earrings (rubber, glass glitter and copper), a robe (rubber, glass glitter, hand dyed ostrich feathers and copper) and two anklets (rubber and copper).

The installation of these apparently personal items in the gallery's small exhibition space gives the impression of a private room in a house – a bathroom, a closet, or a bedroom.

Lawrence's sculptures consist of a wide range of materials and a wide range of gestures: from luxurious furs and fabrics to rubber, tar, or brass. Some objects result from a minimal intervention by the artist, while others seem to consist of an overabundance of intricate constructions. Their surrealistic combinations blur the lines of functionality and imagination, and trigger a range of possible narratives. Draped, bent and curled into sexually nonambiguous forms, Lawrence's sculptures are full of fetishistic desire. She manipulates the chosen materials into objects that are as seductive as molasses but repulsive as encrustations.

In his recent manuscript Sociologist Robert Max Jackson (*Intimate Combat: Sexuality and Gender Inequality*, 2014) argues that – under the conditions of gender inequality – women and men both emphasize women as objects of sexual pleasure: The idea of 'female sexual narcissism' suggests that women seek sexual satisfaction through the actions of men on them rather than taking men as sexual objects. Both women and men, according to this idea, take women's bodies as a focus of sexual excitement. This implies, that even though men impose their desires and fantasies on women as result of their dominance, women simultaneously use sexuality as a resource to ameliorate their subordination. In this sense the deliberate choice of a woman to abandoning herself to her sexual desires can be seen as empowerment and overcoming of the cultural suppression of female sexuality.

Given that Lawrence's works are always scaled to the body and partly made from erotic material, an emphasis lies on the sensual and sexual implications of her works. The positioning of the sculptures in the gallery space without any distinguishing means, like display cases or podiums, leaves the objects often times in a position where the viewer looks down onto them. This space and relationship to the viewer, respectively, is referred to by the artist as an 'erotic submissive space.' Despite it's negative connotation, Lawrence describes this space as humanizing and one of mutual trust.

Lawrence's installations are underpinned by an uncanny presence of opulent objects. Though her work does not address the same issues as Michael E. Smith's, her sculptures too can be spoken about in an animistic language, one ascribing them emotions, demeanor and even fate: it seems as if the objects are clinging to the wall, or crawling over the floor, or waiting for something to pass. Their relationship to the human body is ever present, and yet they remain among themselves in a world of objects (Koch: *Catfish Instead of Buddha*. Michael E. Smith's *Materialism of Basic Needs*, 2013). They are here in lieu of the body that they dressed and the emotions this someone experienced.

By emphasizing the absence of a body Lawrence creates an invisible physical presence that evokes a self-consciousness about our own behavior as a viewer.

India Lawrence (born 1988 in London) lives and works in Los Angeles. Her work has been shown at Greene Exhibitions, Los Angeles; Art Berlin Contemporary, Berlin; Grand Century, New York; Guggenheim Gallery, Orange; Roberts & Tilton, Los Angeles and Tilton Gallery, New York.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a limited edition poster, published by Verlag für zeitgenössische Beobachtung (ISBN 978-3-944877-13-6).