

Yaara Zach – Black Friday  
19.6-1.8.20

### A Prototype for Survival

Yaara Zach uses industrial materials to create an imaginary natural world. Is it imaginary though? Her current works are based on nature and natural evolution, and are inspired by animals' means of survival as well as our own survival instincts. The works in this show were made prior to the pandemic that has conquered our globe, yet they represent elements from the past as well as from the present. They bring forth moments of birth, death, and rebirth while creating a groundbreaking experience that proposes a mirror to a multilayered existential reality.

A wild animal is situated on the gallery's second floor: Is it aching? Is it bleeding? Perhaps it is sleeping? Is it even breathing? Tent, 2019-2020, is made of faux fur coats and sportswear bought by the artist on a Black Friday sale, a day in which millions of shoppers flood stores (online and in person), while massive sales are happening across the world. These purposeful mass gatherings leak survival instincts: adrenaline, hunger, excitement, and struggle appear as a reminder of our most primal mode of existence. Zach bought the material in a flash in the midst of this chaos, and within minutes was situated back at her studio, cutting the coats into pieces just to sew them back together again later on. This powerful act, impulsive and animalistic, is at the core of her works.

Hanging across the room, on the gallery's first floor, are Untitled (Cocoons), 2019-2020. These gray latex cocoon-like structures hang in various heights from the ceiling enabling the viewer to go under and around the large-scaled "bodies" which, despite their artificial materiality, seem alive. On the ground beneath them are milky-white Cocoons (Rocks), 2018-2019. These silicone rocks are somewhat transparent and represent a contradiction between the stability and the fossil characteristics of a rock, alongside the softness and transparency of the skin-like silky silicone. The fragility and the flexibility of each of these objects corresponds with the diversity and adaptability needed for survival.

Traditions of storytelling make up some of our human need for continuation, community building, and reproduction. In this manner the title of Pale Hose, 2018-2020, was inspired by one of the four horses of the apocalypse, mentioned in the Old and New Testaments. The object, created with silicone, pipes, and thread, and situated on the ground, was originally sewn as a cocoon structure and then cut open to create a kind of snake slough. As we know, snakes shed their skin to allow for further growth and to remove parasites that may have attached to their old skin. Similarly humans, almost unnoticeably, shed continuously allowing fresh skin to be revealed.

An evolutionary metamorphosis, change, and rejuvenation is further amplified in Hungry Eyes, 2018-2020, which references an evolutionary mutation: Mexican Tetra fish live in dark underwater caves and have lost their ability to develop eyes. However, with the

deficit of this function they have naturally developed other essential strengths. The object made from the same materials as his peer, can also be imagined as a reptile's X-rayed spine.

Referring to the "Surviving Body," a term Zach has been working with for a few years now, in *The Couple I and II*, 2019-2020, the artist chose to work with training jackets as a reference to bodily sweat and physical abilities. Hanging on the wall, the unused Adidas jackets are cut and manipulated to create structures that are missing parts and simultaneously complete each other.

Upstairs, the nomadic characteristic of *Tent* is accompanied by large silicone sheets that were industrially embroidered with images of supermarket carts. The images, abstracted and loose, manifest organic shapes, some of which appear as body organs: a brain, flesh, and more. These carts serve as the vessel in which we hunt and gather in contemporary society; we buy food at the store and put all the ingredients in the cart. However, much like the tent, these carts are used today as portable homes for the homeless, and containers for gathering bags and bags of recyclable materials.

The body is the backbone of the exhibition, but is dramatically absent. Here, the centerpiece of the show made of evil eyed beads, lies on the ground of the second floor. *Evil Eye*, 2016-2020, is both iconically beautiful, a-la haute couture, as well as dramatically chilling. It is made of many small evil-eye beads sewn onto a cloth-suit. Arranged on the ground like a body, the heavy piece is lacking the body's presence, while it looks like thousands of flies have come to taste a corpse.

In Middle East traditions little evil-eye beads are known to protect against a curse, or curses to come. Little did the artist know a pandemic is coming our way – a time in which the experience of survival has been profoundly intensified. What we acknowledged as "being alive" has been overtaken by deep fear and anxiety. It has become clear that surviving means running from (death); we rush to the supermarket where danger awaits, we lock ourselves at home as we fear interactions with others, we horde on food, drink, toilet paper, and essential elements for the home. We wear masks to be safe of public air, and latex gloves to be clear of germs. These materials propose a shift back to reality. Beneath this fantasy we reveal a truth that is able to shatter all speculations.

Naomi Lev