



Pro Arts | 150 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza | Oakland, CA 94612
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Gallery Hours: Tuesday - Friday, noon to 6pm

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Sofie Ramos and Phillip Maisel

Exhibition Runs: April 13 – May 18

Opening Reception: Friday, April 13, 6:00 – 8:00pm



Pro Arts is pleased to present *Sofie Ramos & Phillip Maisel*, a two-person exhibition, featuring San Francisco-based artists. Curated by Andres Guerrero from Guerrero Gallery (SF), this pairing is informed by their mutual relationship to collage, assemblage and photography. Both artists also share an interest in making work that exists as multiple permutations, as opposed to a single or resolved final composition. In this way, Ramos and Maisel emphasize repetition, mistakes, and reconstruction, as well as the importance of layers, multiple vantage points and infinite truths.

While rooted in the language of photography, Maisel's practice traverses sculpture, collage, and installation. Never fully resigning itself to a single medium, each piece meditates upon perception, while drawing on the framework of architecture and design.

Maisel makes series of photographs of everyday materials, making adjustments between each frame by repositioning, introducing, or extracting elements. On the final printed image, Maisel reintroduces dimensionality to the flat picture plane by integrating collage elements or physical cuts into the surface. Maisel draws attention to the form by confusing the perception of its layers—the collage within the collage, where the part cannot be differentiated from the whole, nor the image from the real thing. In many of the artist's works, he purposefully complicates the relationship between representation and reality, asking the viewer to consider whether image and material are distinguishable.

Sofie Ramos creates installation-based paintings that explore spatiality as a physical and tangible experience, by incorporating the existing architecture as well as sculptural constructions and found objects into a total composition in a given space. Her colorful and chaotic compositions are results of active and nonlinear processes of accumulating, arranging, reusing and reworking layers of visual material that expose/amplify the connections and relationships between works of art and their physical and social contexts. One of the main impetuses for this kind of work is the desire to walk into a painting and to disrupt the ability to distinguish the confines of a work of art. The question of where one piece ends and another piece or the containing space begins is a key component of all of her installations. Obsessed with space as a medium not only for painting, but also for time and memory, she seeks to occupy, (re)define and (re)configure empty or unused spaces, while still leaving boundaries open or ambiguous, or at least permeable.

In addition to her installations, Sofie makes video animations of her spaces that document and add another layer to her process, thus exposing the reactionary nature of the work as well as its indeterminacy of form. Instead of presenting a static space as a resolved Painting, the video of the variable forms of the space over time allows its status as Art to dissolve into the process of the accumulation of formal elements and decisions. The goal is not to create a harmonious composition, but to facilitate and record the interaction between the space, the materials and herself.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

SOFIE RAMOS

Sofie Ramos (b. 1990, Cincinnati) completed her MFA in Art Practice at UC Berkeley in 2015 and her BA in Visual Art from Brown University in 2013. She has exhibited recently all over the Bay Area, Los Angeles, San Diego, and randomly in Mechelen, Belgium. Her first two museum exhibitions are coming up back to back in 2019 starting with MOCA Tucson in January, followed by the San Jose ICA in March, both of which will give her an entire gallery to transform. She has had the chance to install large, site-specific pieces in many prominent Bay Area spaces recently including the brand new SWIM Gallery (Luggage Store Annex), the Lab, Palo Alto Art Center, Guerrero Gallery, Incline Gallery, and most notably, Johansson Projects in Oakland, which was a solo show as well as a kind of a residency in the gallery, where she installed her largest

immersive installation to date over a one-month period. Other residencies include the Growlery in San Francisco in 2016, Arts Benicia in Benicia, CA in 2014, and Facebook's AiR program in 2016. She is the only artist with three permanent installations at Facebook Headquarters in Menlo Park, recently completing her third just last month in February 2018.

PHILLIP MAISEL

Phillip Maisel (b. 1981, Chicago) completed his MFA in Visual Arts from California College of the Arts in 2013, and his BS in Psychology from McGill University in 2003. He has had solo exhibitions at Gregory Lind Gallery in San Francisco; Shulamit Nazarian in Los Angeles, and Document in Chicago. His work has also been exhibited at the William Benton Museum in Connecticut; The University of New Mexico in Taos; and DeCordova Museum in Massachusetts. Reviews of his work have appeared in Lenscratch, Art Practical, Modern Painters, Fabrik, Square Cylinder, and New City Art, among others. Maisel has lectured at the San Francisco Art Institute, California College of the Arts, and the Nueva School. He is represented by Gregory Lind Gallery in San Francisco and Document in Chicago. He lives and works in San Francisco.

ABOUT PRO ARTS:

Pro Arts is a non-profit art institution working in the visual arts, performance, music, social practice, public art, and education. Founded in 1973, Pro Arts is one of the few remaining institutions in Oakland that is artist-centered and that continues to function as a platform for experimentation, supporting the freedom to create challenging, non-commercial work in critical art context.

RELATED PUBLIC PROGRAM:

Opening Reception: Friday, April 13, 2018, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

This exhibition is made possible by the Zellerbach Family Foundation.

