

Hannah Whitaker *Hide Your Daughters*

Exhibition dates: September 8 – October 8, 2017
Reception for the artist: Friday, September 8, 2017

Marinaro is pleased to present *Hide Your Daughters*, an exhibition of photographs by Hannah Whitaker to inaugurate the opening of the new gallery space at 1 Oliver Street.

Shot on a single sheet of 4x5 film, each work results from layered exposures and in-camera masking. Whitaker's laborious process begins with a sketch she makes in Photoshop. The sketch forms the basis for a set of hand-cut paper screens she inserts into the camera during exposure and functions as a set of instructions for how to arrange the bodies, sheets of colored paper, and metal grates that she photographs. As with her previous work, Whitaker's use of punch-card-like screens, along with an early image software graphic sensibility, emerges from her enduring interest in automation and the history of computing.

Expanding this investigation, here Whitaker uses repetitive bodily gestures to explore rote, mechanized modes of thought and their cultural contexts. The exhibition incorporates imagery drawn loosely from America's most famous dance troupe—the Rockettes—as well as hand gestures seen in various modes of digital communication.

The Rockettes' exacting, synchronized movements evoke a kind of automated compliance, as if executing an algorithm's instruction. The recent controversy around their participation in Donald Trump's inauguration (the parent company agreed to take part; many individual Rockettes objected) along with its history of racial homogeneity (women of color dancers were kept out until the late 1980s), its bizarrely militaristic imagery, and its presentation of retrograde femininity makes the institution's symbolism newly resonant. The show's title comes from a 1969 profile in *Dance Magazine* of the group's founder, Russell Markert.

In addition to the movements of dancers, the gestures in Whitaker's photographs point to commonly used hand signs in emojis and social media and reflect a broad cultural tendency to distill expression into binary modes of approval or disapproval. Demonstrating the tenuous relationship these signs have to fixed meaning, the OK gesture was also briefly embroiled in a Trump-related controversy, when right-wing internet trolls successfully started a rumor that the innocuous signal of approval was in fact a symbol of white supremacy. *Thumps Up* and *Thumps Down*, the two smallest works in the show, may be seen as tongue-in-cheek reminders of related dynamics at work when viewing an art exhibition—involving the decision to like or dislike.

Hannah Whitaker (b. 1980, Washington D.C.) received her BA from Yale University and holds an MFA from ICP/Bard College. She has had solo exhibitions at M+B, Los Angeles; Galerie Christophe Gaillard, Paris; Thierry Goldberg, New York and Locust Projects, Miami. Whitaker was featured in Public Art Fund's citywide exhibition, *Commercial Break* in New York in February 2017 and the Cincinnati Art Museum's *Big Pictures* in 2014. Group shows include those at Casey Kaplan, New York; Galerie Xippas, Paris; Cherry and Martin, Los Angeles; Higher Pictures, New York; Tokyo Institute of Photography and Rencontres d'Arles in France, where she was nominated for the Discovery Prize. In 2014 her work was selected for inclusion in the photography exhibition *Foam Talent* in Amsterdam. The artist's first monograph, *Peer to Peer*, was published in 2015 by Mörel Books. Whitaker lives and works in Brooklyn and is a contributing editor for Triple Canopy.