

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2024

**MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY GALLERIES ANNOUNCES
*CASE STUDIES 4: HILLIARY GABRYEL – SIDE SLEEPER***

GABRYEL TRANSFORMS FOUND, VACUUM-FORMED HEADBOARDS AND VANITY MIRRORS TO EXPLORE INTERWOVEN DYNAMICS BETWEEN CLASS, GENDER, AND CONSUMER CULTURE

ON VIEW FEBRUARY 8 THROUGH APRIL 21, 2024



**Hilliary Gabryel. *Sylvia*, 2023. Found headboards with etched mirrors, latex, neoprene, and steel tacks.
Courtesy of the artist.**

Montclair, NJ – Montclair State University Galleries presents the exhibition *Case Studies 4: Hilliary Gabryel – Side Sleeper* from February 8 through April 21, 2024.

Gabryel explores themes of consumer culture, resale markets, the American Dream, and gender. The artist transforms vacuum-formed headboards and vanity mirrors popularized by Franco Cozzo, an Italian-Australian salesman whose bedroom sets were often given female names.

For Gabryel, these furniture pieces hold the promises of something other than themselves, i.e. a piece of plastic masquerading as a handmade marble sculpture. This reflects a crucial part of contemporary American consumer culture where simulation is better than the real thing.

By replicating design motifs associated with Art Nouveau and Italian Palazzos –which are related to bourgeois class status– into mass-produced objects, Cozzo sold what Gabryel refers to as “aspirational objects.” Gabryel sourced the discarded furniture through refuse in her neighborhood and resale markets such as Craigslist or Facebook Marketplace. They are often found dirty and broken, but Gabryel sees them as holding a fading idealism, reflecting a cracked image of America when the suburban dream was flourishing.

Gabryel notes that the original smooth and monochromatic designs of the headboards reflect tropes of innocence, impressionability, and purity. The work features blooming flowers and over-exaggerated curves referencing visual metaphors for femininity. The artist transforms the objects by upholstering them with colored latex and steel tacks. Gabryel’s craftwork disrupts Cozzo’s original aesthetics enhancing and imbuing them with sexual energy and power. Select works are renamed after women the artist sees as having complex relationships around expectations and beauty standards.

Gabryel’s interventions change the ownership of these designs and question what it means for a man to sell architectural decor that effectively renders the bed as an object of femininity. The artist’s alterations liberate these objects from their original intent creating new possibilities and challenging the expectations embedded within these consumer products.

Digital Engagement

- The University Galleries is a proud partner of [Bloomberg Connects](#), the free arts and culture app created by Bloomberg Philanthropies. The Bloomberg Connects app, available for download from Google Play or the App Store, makes the University Galleries accessible for both onsite or offsite visits through photo, audio, and video features that offer insights into past and current exhibitions from artists, curators, professors, students, and more. The Galleries’ joins over 300 cultural organizations worldwide with exclusive digital guides on Bloomberg Connects.

On View

Monday – Friday, 12 – 6 p.m. and by appointment.

Please visit the Kasser Theater website for up to date information regarding hours.

www.peakperfs.org/box-office

Opening Reception

Thursday, February 8, 2024

5 – 7 p.m.

Alexander Kasser Theater Lobby

Celebrate the opening of Montclair State University Galleries’ Spring 2024 exhibitions *Case Studies 4: Hilliary Gabryel – Side Sleeper*.

6 p.m.

Remarks by the artist, Director Megan C. Austin, and Curator Jesse Bandler Firestone

About The Montclair State University Galleries

The Montclair State University Galleries brings together ideas, perspectives and dialogues to foster curiosity and shared understandings through art. The University Galleries presents diverse and inclusive

exhibitions and programs creating connections that unite the campus experience with local and global communities. www.montclair.edu/galleries

All exhibitions and programs are free and open to the public.

Social Media

Join the conversation on social media by tagging @montclairstategalleries and using the hashtag #MontclairStateGalleries when posting.

Support

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