

Ruptured Dichotomies

Lauren Bradshaw & Theo Trotter

The Crit Lab Peekskill

Dennis Fox Residency Exhibition

The Crit Lab at MAPSpace



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Dennis Fox Residency Exhibition*

November 12 - 30, 2022

The Crit Lab at MAPSpace

6 north pearl street, port chester, ny 10573

www.thecritlab.com

www.mirandaartsprojectspace.com



In memory
Dennis Fox, 1955 - 2019

In-Person. Virtual. Shop. Catalog.

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The Crit Lab is pleased to introduce our newest residency program

The Crit Lab Peekskill Dennis Fox Residency.

The Crit Lab presents our first residents, Lauren Bradshaw and Theo Trotter. Lauren and Theo spent a productive six weeks living, working, and collaborating in the Crit Lab Peekskill Loft. The exhibition and catalog present a selection of individual and collaborative works from the artists.

At The Crit Lab we believe artists can and should share resources to build better ecosystems. In this spirit, and in honor of our dear friend Dennis Fox (1955-2019), we have created this live/work summer residency.

The Crit Lab Peekskill Loft was owned originally by our dear friend Dennis Fox, who passed away from Leukemia in 2019. Dennis was a talented gilder, gifted restorer of paintings and frames, a master craftsman who loved art and artists. Since Dennis's untimely death, the loft has been managed and owned by Crit Lab founder Patricia Miranda. The Crit Lab is currently run out of this space. Artists in the Dennis Fox Residency are invited to spend a four to six weeks living and working in the gorgeous Peekskill live/work loft space, at no cost to the artists. The excitement of collaboration is a fundamental aspect of the Residency.

The work of Lauren Bradshaw and Theo Trotter explores material intimacy in objects of defiant vulnerability. The visibility of fracture, wound, and bodily transformation is both discomfiting and beautiful, familiar forms rendered strange, new identities knit together with a confrontational delicacy. These artists bring a fragile strength to bodily references, tangled softness of lace pierced with a sharp pin, shriveled sinew of latex, bloodied bandages countered by nail polish, panty hose and makeup. The trappings of childish femininity are repurposed into mutable bodies in the act of formation, continually in motion, turning away from, turning towards, turning into, perpetually in the act of becoming. In both their collaborative and individual works, Bradshaw and Trotter place unfinish, openness, and a tactile grisly beauty as an explicit priority, one of desire and repulsion, of flayed emotion and skin that challenges and seduces. Like a birth in process, hard to look at and hard to look away from, these objects are unapologetic in their abject beauty and rebellious tenderness.

Patricia Miranda, director, MAPSpace and The Crit Lab

Proposals

Theo Trotter

A driving motivation behind this residency is the creation of collaborative work. We plan to explore shared themes concerning the body and abjection, as well as the many material affinities between our practices. Solo work that I plan to produce includes a new body of work engaging with the concept of lace as a second skin, as well as themes of trans childhood, and dichotomies around the “real” vs “artificial.” In this work, I will be utilizing materials such as textiles, latex, medical supplies, and hair. Lastly, I am preparing a performance for this year’s Art in Odd Places, scheduled to take place September 23-25 this year. This performance is titled “Emergence,” and involves sewing over every scar on my body, whether surgical, accidental, or self-inflicted, to represent gender transition as a continuous process of creating the self.

My work references the trans body as a palimpsest, through the marks of transformation and trauma that manifest on it. It deals with the idea of transformation as a necessary and transcendent, but simultaneously painful experience by utilizing the tension between beautiful and disgusting visual elements. This conflict between attraction and repulsion also represents injury and healing. I address visceral bodily experiences at the point where language begins to fail, dealing with, among other things, physical harm to the body, and the injury of forced femininity. I utilize a variety of different media including textiles and latex. What many of my materials have in common is a pliability and fragility that mimics the flesh. I am drawn to other materials, such as lace, because of the closeness and intimacy to the skin that they evoke. Touch is an essential part of my process, and sometimes remains visible in the work as imprints in the materials. I am always in conversation with the materials, at once injuring or harming them, and allowing their nature to shape the trajectory of my work.

Theo Trotter is an artist whose work investigates themes around trans experience, memory, and the body. He works with a range of materials including textiles, paper, and latex. He has participated in residencies including most recently the School of Visual Arts summer residency. His work has been included in exhibitions in New York City, where he is currently based, and across the Northeast. He received a BA in Studio Arts from Bard College in 2019.

Lauren Bradshaw

My primary aim for this residency is to continue my investigation into the relationships between ephemerality, materiality, and the body, utilizing materials that retain an inherent vulnerability due to their softness such as latex, fibers, and textiles. I plan to later combine these soft works with past and/or future ceramic works in order to accentuate the tension between bodily dichotomies. I am also eager to collaborate with Theo Trotter as our work both exists at the intersection of corporeality and materiality and has significant overlap in the use of materials, processes, and conceptual content.

Although these sculptures are not directly anthropomorphic, the corporeality of materials is accentuated in rendering the entropic state of our ephemeral bodies. We often avoid thoughts concerning the anatomical systems that function beneath our skin as they reveal our mortality to be tangible. Clay becomes a record of physical process due to its plasticity, which captures moments beyond bodily transience. It is initially manipulated as a soft material, but once fired it gains permanence and loses the ongoing malleability of softness. Soft sculpture challenges the stability and structure typically associated with sculpture due to its elasticity and innate amorphousness. The vulnerability of this formlessness reflects the fragility of our bodies and serves as an interplay between fluctuating levels of material impermanence. Latex and fibers have been utilized in conjunction with ceramic to reveal the tension between dichotomies such as hard versus soft or internal versus external. In response to the abjection of mortality, these works can also be viewed through the lens of existentialism and absurdity, leading to a revolt against meaninglessness. They may reference death and decay, but retain a delicate vulnerability that ultimately suggests the resilience of their existence.

Lauren Bradshaw earned a BA in Studio Art at the University of North Georgia in 2019 and an MFA in Ceramics at Clemson University in 2021. She has been included in several group exhibitions primarily throughout the Southeast. She was recently included in the HEXENTEXTE publication entitled "Dream House: A Collaborative Zine in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of Womanhouse" and spoke at the online symposium, "Dismantling the Body: Possibilities and Limitations in Art Making", organized by the University of Washington Graduate Students of Art History (GSAH). Her work was included in the 35th Annual "Materials Hard + Soft" International Contemporary Craft Competition and Exhibition and she will have a solo exhibition in October 2022 at the Roy C. Moore Gallery on the University of North Georgia Gainesville campus.

On Collaboration

Theo Trotter

As both Lauren and I are artists who think and work through and with materials, the intuitive connection between our practices became clear early on in our working relationship. Evidence of a similar creative instinct was visible through many parallels in our works, especially in our choices of materials, and so joining them together became a natural process. “In the depth of matter,” as Bruno Schulz writes in his *Treatise on Tailor’s Dummies*, “...tensions build up, attempts at form appear. The whole of matter pulsates with infinite possibilities that send dull shivers through it.” During the course of this collaboration, I learned to locate the “tensions” or “dull shivers” and open them up, join them with my own, or tease them out of the material.

In my solo work, every component is chosen for its relevance to my experiences. In a collaborative exchange, there is both understanding and an element of mystery, with the knowledge that the form is to be discovered, not dictated. While there was a familiarity to the elements chosen by an artist with such a similar way of thinking, every action exerted upon, with, or through them took on a new significance, originating from another body both separate and familiar, creating a new but welcome tension. The other and its knowns and unknowns introduce a new element of the process, shaping new forms that live out of and apart from, because of and despite their creators. These objects can be seen as bruises, wounds, evidence of the makers’ bodies. The process is a form of exchange as well as accumulation and decay, addition and subtraction, not always in that order. It is a process of leaving and shaping traces.

Lauren Bradshaw

Collaboration has always seemed daunting to me as I can be excruciatingly particular about my use of materials, their contextual meaning, and the nuances of their arrangement. Relinquishing this sense of control requires trust and vulnerability which leads to the formation of bonding and intimacy. Seeing Theo's work for the first time evoked my immediate sense of connection and the visceral resonance that can only be found in visual language. It was quickly apparent that an abundance of correlations existed between our materials, methods, and conceptual content which allowed our processes to meld effortlessly into one another. It has always been clear to me that Theo's materials are a direct extension of his mental and physical presence, so I felt a responsibility to preserve the integrity of these materials within the collaborative process.

Although I deeply value the conceptual content and physical properties of my materials, I view process rather than tangible matter as the extension of my selfhood. This merging of materials and processes creates a composite embedded with mutual selfhood, and due to the intimacy of this vulnerability, the work achieves a level of tenderness not found in my solo work. Our constant immersion in togetherness, caused by living in the residency space and amongst the studio, felt as effortless and instinctual as the creation of the work. I feel that ease is portrayed as being synonymous with insignificance but I have found the opposite to be true in my own life. As is the case for all experiences of value, this residency has ultimately left me with more questions than answers. The pursuit of these answers will perpetuate the evolution of my studio practice, our personal relationship, artistic collaboration, and the independent life of this work.

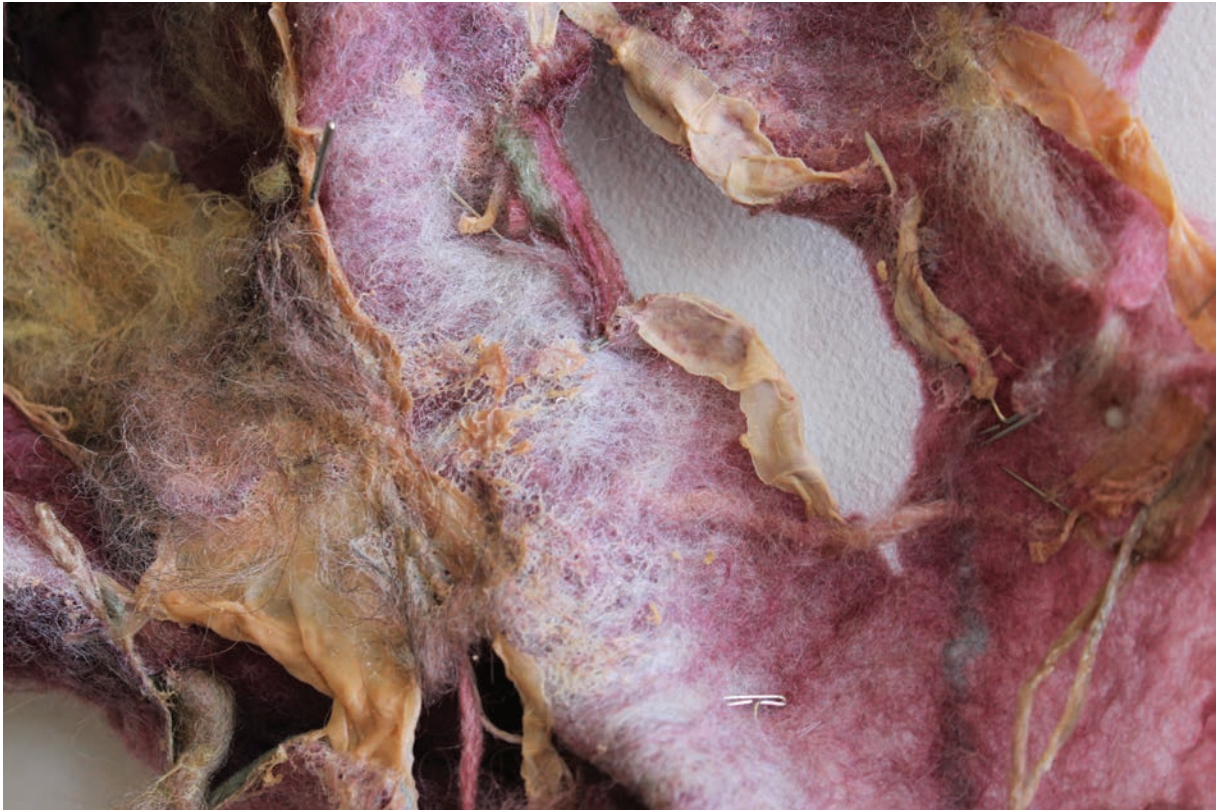


Collaborative Works



Contusion, 2022

Wet-felted wool fibers over cheesecloth, latex, embroidery floss, lace, resin, 15" x 16"





Venation, 2022

Wet-felted wool fibers, handspun yarn, commercial yarn, latex, pins, 18" x 16"





Fascia, 2022

Wet-felted wool & silk fibers over cheesecloth, latex, lace, handspun yarn, thread, 15" x 22"





Abrasion, 2022

Wet-felted wool & silk fibers, cheesecloth, latex, lace, butterfly bandage, fingernail polish, pins, 10" x 11"





Purulence, 2022

Wet-felted wool & silk fibers over cheesecloth, latex, 17" x 14"





Lamella, 2022

Synthetic fabric, latex, lace, embroidery floss, fingernail polish, pins, porcelain, makeup, 4" x 27"





Accumulation, 2022

Muslin, latex, lace, embroidery floss, hook & eyes, synthetic fabrics, fingernail polish, 9" x 27"





Placket, 2022

Wet-felted wool & silk fibers over cheesecloth, latex, lace, gauze, bandages, 16.5" x 29.5"





Enmeshment, 2022

Wet-felted wool & silk fibers, cheesecloth, handspun yarn, latex, gauze, surgical dressing, 10" x 23"





Cautery, 2022

Wet-felted wool & silk fibers over cheesecloth, synthetic fabric, lace, buttons, latex, blood, 11" x 21"





Plexus, 2022

Wet-felted wool & silk fibers over cheesecloth, latex, gauze, fingernail polish, 32" x 31"





Hollowing, 2022

Wet-felted wool fibers over cheesecloth, embroidery floss, thread, latex, 10" x 7.5"





Entanglement, 2022

Latex soaked fabric, wool, embroidery floss, handspun yarn, lace, fingernail polish, pantyhose, makeup
7" x 40"





Adaptation, 2022

Band-Aids, embroidery floss, pantyhose, bandages, cheesecloth, latex, pins, 9.5" x 28"





Excretion, 2022

Gauze, bandages, cheesecloth, pantyhose, latex, embroidery floss, pins, 3.5" x 45"





Entrapment, 2022

Latex soaked cheesecloth and thread, dried beans, lace, 16" x 21.5"









Compression, 2022

Wet-felted wool & silk fibers, handspun yarn, lace, latex, pins, 15" x 10"





Necrosis, 2022

Wet-felted wool & silk fibers, handspun yarn, lace, latex, embroidery floss, fingernail polish, 9.5" x 25"





Splintering, 2022

Wet-felted wool fibers, lace, latex, gauze, pins, thread, blood, 14" x 23"





Propagation, 2022

Latex soaked fabrics, dried beans, wool fibers, 8.5" x 27"





Excoriation, 2022

Wet-felted wool fibers over cheesecloth, latex, fingernail polish, pins, 16" x 18"





Excrescence, 2022

Wet-felted wool & silk fibers, bandages, latex, lace, resin, fingernail polish, 15" x 16"



Unravel, 2022

Wet-felted wool & silk fibers over cheesecloth, latex soaked fabric, lace, shredded fabric, fingernail polish
7" x 22"



Lull, 2022

Wet-felted wool & silk fibers, porcelain, latex, makeup, 10" x 1.5"





Sheathed, 2022

Latex soaked cheesecloth, wool fibers, handspun yarn, shredded fabric, lace, paper, resin, 20" x 27"



Convergence, 2022

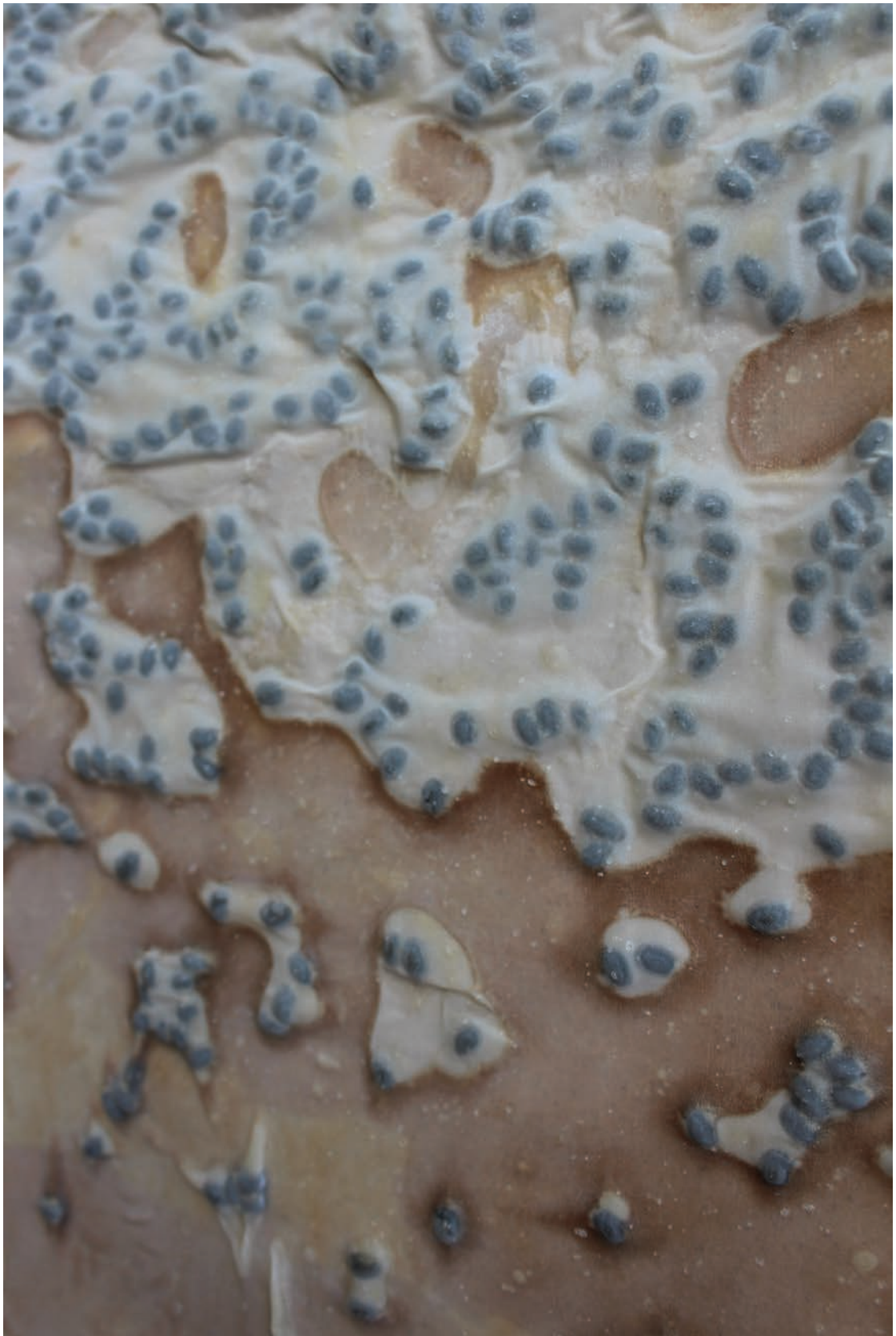
Wet-felted wool fibers, hook & eyes, thread, 24" x 12" x 3"

Lauren Bradshaw



Catalyst, 2022

Wet-felted wool fibers, hook & eyes, thread, 12" x 4" x 3"





Displaced, 2022

Muslin, synthetic fabric, latex, dried beans, wet-felted wool fibers, cheesecloth, 42" x 24"



Inward I, 2022

Wet-felted wool fibers, hook & eyes, thread, muslin, cheesecloth, latex, 24" x 48"



Extrication, 2022

Muslin, crepe fabric, latex, dried beans, thread, embroidery floss, 30" x 38"





Inward III, 2022

Wet-felted wool fibers, hook & eyes, embroidery floss, cheesecloth, latex, 30" x 14"



Shard, 2022

Latex, cheesecloth, hook & eyes, embroidery floss, 6" x 4"



Inward II, 2022

Wet-felted wool fibers, hook & eyes, embroidery floss, cheesecloth, latex, 30" x 20"



Languid II, 2022

Muslin, synthetic fabric, latex, hook & eyes, thread, 50" x 14"



Languid I, 2022

Muslin, latex, hook & eyes, thread, 30" x 14"



Theo Trotter



Fissure, 2022

latex, lace, resin, surgical dressing, butterfly bandage, t-pins, gauze, 9" x 6"





Germination IV, 2022

Lace, latex, nail polish, artificial hair, 4" x 4"





Cocoon, 2022

textiles, polyester fiberfill, lace, gauze bandage, pins, 24" x 18" x 18"











The Studio











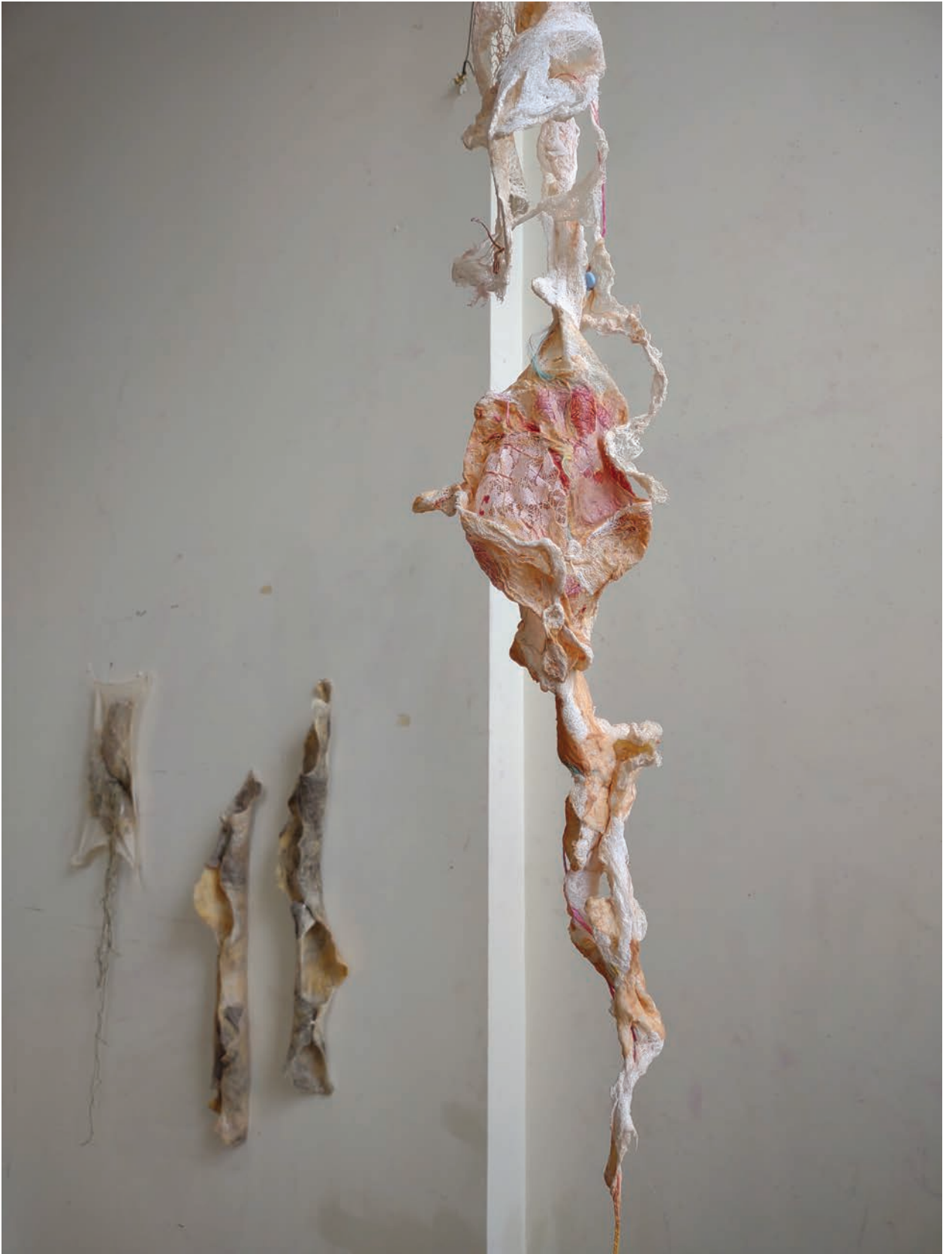


















Piero di Cosimo, The Crit Lab Studio Cat



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