

For Immediate Release

Mercer Union presents Rochelle Goldberg's first institutional solo exhibition in Canada with the expansive sculpture commission *Sun Moon Stars*

17 August 2023 (TORONTO, O.N.) — Mercer Union presents *Sun Moon Stars*, the first institutional solo exhibition in Canada by Berlin-based Canadian artist **Rochelle Goldberg**, from **9 September – 11 November 2023**. This is the fifth project in Mercer Union's *Artist First* commissioning platform, following Lydia Ourahmane's *Tassili* earlier this year.

Goldberg works across sculpture and installation to produce complex worlds with living and non-living matter in states of exchange. Her artworks destabilize the boundaries between entities and objects to question ideas of control and notions of self. The artist's material process and conceptual practice has regularly examined the scales and properties of extraction, contamination, and instability—from chemical interaction between substances to the construction of the social body. Extending on these themes using historical wax-working, organic matter, and metal casting, the objects in Goldberg's sprawling installation at Mercer Union consider ideas of decay in relation to historical agency.

Titled, *Sun Moon Stars*, her new body of commissioned work is an exploration of the mystique of Mary of Egypt, a composite figure of varied, intersecting histories and narratives of the spiritual and extra-mundane. Goldberg's interest in mythology goes beyond allegory to consider how myths are remade and transformed by incorporating different subjectivities. For the artist, one of the striking elements in the myriad stories about Mary of Egypt is that following death, the subject's body did not experience decay. This unexpected refusal or deviation from decomposition reshapes our relation to our self, body, and environments. For Goldberg, it is the starting point from which the objects in this exhibition contend with the passage of time.

Sun Moon Stars is grounded by two bronze sculptures of fragmented bodies in stages of disrepair and new life. All around, mundane objects surrounding the mythos of Mary of Egypt such as various food provisions have been cast in aluminum or treated with pigment to halt the process of decay. At Mercer Union, the artist uses a series of wire ropes to extend the installation from floor-to-ceiling, suspending, disrupting, and evoking the tension between these objects. Banks of vanity lights hang from the structure, bathing the installation in a dazzling glow that gestures a desire to reveal the unseen.

Rochelle Goldberg (b. 1984, Vancouver) works across sculpture and installation to produce complex ecologies and narrative conditions. Her works destabilize the boundaries between entities and objects, elaborating the states of emergence and decay at the site of encounter. Recent exhibitions include Kunsthalle Lingen, Germany (2022); Gallerie delle Prigioni, Treviso, Italy (2022); Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, University of California (2021); Centre international d'art et du paysage de Vassivière, Beaumont-du-Lac, France (2021); Oakville Galleries, Canada (2019); and The Power Station, Dallas (2019). She was Artist in Residence at The Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas (2018); and was selected to present for the

inaugural Frieze Sculpture at Rockefeller Center, New York (2019). She holds a Master of Fine Arts from the Milton Avery School of the Arts at Bard College, New York.

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Insurance

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artistfirst

About Mercer Union

Mercer Union is a non-profit, artist-run centre dedicated to commissioning and producing new works of contemporary art, and providing an engaging program that encourages critical inquiry and conversation. We champion ambitious exhibitions that empower diverse Canadian and international artists in formative and established stages of their practice.

Press kit

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