



Mercer Union  
a centre for contemporary art

For Immediate Release

## Mercer Union presents Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill's first institutional solo exhibition in Toronto with the interdisciplinary installation *M\*\*\*\*\**

24 June 2024 (TORONTO, O.N.) — Mercer Union presents *M\*\*\*\*\**, a solo show by Vancouver-based artist **Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill**, from **6 July to 31 August 2024**. The exhibition, featuring sculptures, drawings, and a film installation, takes up the ideology, experience, and practice of motherhood through its manifold signifiers. *M\*\*\*\*\** is the artist's first institutional solo project in Toronto.

Gabrielle L'Hirondelle Hill works across various disciplines to reflect on knowledges and economies embedded in dominant, Eurocentric modes of thinking. Interested in how value is ascertained, Hill examines systems of exchange, circulation, and ownership that shape the way we arrive at determining meaning. Taking an affective approach to materials that considers their social histories, Hill's works build new structures grounded in ideas of kinship and plenitude.

At Mercer Union, Hill uses found materials including blackberries, hair, silk tissue, and photocopied magazines to construct an aesthetic in which memory and place are centred. *M\*\*\*\*\** draws resonances between 16mm film stock and collage, looking at the particular ability of each material to embalm and encapsulate a cyclical experience of time. A series of sculptures made of disassembled umbrella frames reference ideas and sensations related to conception: images of spores, parasites, and body orifices suspended from the armatures contribute toward a visceral understanding of reproduction (*Site Parasite Dice Paradise* and *Octom\*\**, 2023). New drawings on silk tissue are soaked in blackberry ink, the seams lightly sutured with film tape (*Project and Shadow*, 2024). Elsewhere in the gallery, this pictorial surface reoccurs as a set of projections within a looping, cameraless film installation. The work from which the exhibition title is derived, *M\*\*\*\*\** comes from a recent presentation at the National Gallery of Canada, where Hill was recognized as one of the short-listed artists for the 2023 Sobey Art Award.

Across the exhibition, Hill brings together a body of work that speaks to motherhood as both a corporeal and disembodied experience, with the capacity of transcending linear time through the bonds it forms. Of particular interest are the social readings surrounding procreation—in the title of the exhibition and in titles of individual works, asterisks replace omitted letters, like those of censored expletives, pointing to the denigration that is often attributed to feminine labour and parenthood. Between the tethers of the inconsequential and the insurmountable, Hill's reevaluation of motherhood locates within it a sense of multiplicity.

"Gabrielle poetically materializes otherwise invisible systems of thought that govern the way we move through the world. She reveals underlying preconceptions and contradictions and compels us to imagine more expansive models. *M\*\*\*\*\** is a personal body of work that reflects on motherhood as one such system that contends with a complex experience that we still grapple with today, that

has a power of reciprocity and care built in that can be activated.” says **Theresa Wang**, Director & Curator of Mercer Union.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a performance in the gallery on 17 August, during which Vancouver-based dancer, choreographer, and artist Justine A. Chambers will respond to Hill’s installation.

**Gabrielle L’Hirondelle Hill** is an artist and writer. Her practice explores the history of found materials to enquire into concepts of land, property, and economy. Recent exhibitions include the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2023); Le Magasin CNAC, Grenoble (2023); the 59th Venice Biennale (2022); the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2021); the College Art Galleries at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon (2020); and Gallery TPW, Toronto (2018). She is a member of BUSH gallery, an Indigenous artist collective that seeks to challenge Eurocentric art models, and to centre the land and Indigenous epistemologies. Hill is Cree and English, with maternal roots in the Michel Band and Papaschase. She lives on the unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm and səliłwətał Nations.

Gabrielle L’Hirondelle Hill: *M\*\*\*\*\** is co-produced by Mercer Union, Toronto, and the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver.

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## 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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