

EFA Project Space, Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts
323 West 39th St, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10018

May 15 – 30, 2021

Wants & Needs

Jane Fentress
Austin Fisher
Evan Curtis Charles Hall
Kyuri Jeon
David Johnson
Jessi Ali Lin
Rebecca Naegele
Emmanuela Soria Ruiz
Valentina Soto Illanes
Sonnie Wooden Jr.
Julian Zeidler



Rebecca Naegele, *Mythic Progress* (detail), 2021

Gallery Hours: [by appointment only](#) Weds-Sun 12-6pm

Have we established an appropriate sense of closure? Have the forces that structure our political subjectivities and circumscribe our social realities been thoroughly appeased? To what extent will our expressions of dissent and the forms of our acquiescence be legible and legitimized? And to what ends do our creative expression serve beyond our immediate spheres of influence?

These are the questions that animate this group exhibition of moving image, installation, and sculptural works that measure the weight of creative output against contemporary social and political strife, from surveillance capitalism to the racist gestures of white grievance politics, charting in their course the effects of such phenomena on the self and on society at large. From elegiac memorials dedicated to influential figures to material investigations into the hostility of the built environment and the historical echoes of colonial exchanges within the present, the exhibition is at its core concerned with the possibility of negotiating in real terms and real space the structural conditions that remain out of sight but nevertheless bear effects on how we come to understand relationships in the present.

Fundamental to both the development of the individual works in *Wants & Needs* as well as the collective arrangement of the works is an awareness of the limits of gratification: how our responses to the external world are conditioned by and delimited to the set of perceptible and contingent methods we have available to analyze the world. Rather than sidestepping this impasse, these artists—all of whom are 2020 alumni of the University of Pennsylvania MFA interdisciplinary program—take this as a central challenge and have produced responses that move through that chasm between desire and necessity that defines so much of our present condition.

Wants & Needs is co-presented by EFA Project Space and the MFA Department at the University of Pennsylvania with funding from The Sachs Program for Arts Innovation, the Weitzman Graduate Fine Arts department, and the Weitzman Student Council at the University of Pennsylvania.