

Wasserman Projects to open Fall Exhibitions**SOFT SERVE**

Featuring Machine Dazzle (New York, NY) and Gracelee Lawrence (Climax, NY)

On View September 21 – December 14, 2024

Fall Fete Gala + VIP Preview: Thursday, September 19, 2024

Opening Reception: Saturday, September 21, 2024

Detroit—July 15, 2024—Wasserman Projects is pleased to open their Fall Season with a two-person exhibition featuring Machine Dazzle and Gracelee Lawrence on view from September 21 – December 14, 2024. This exhibition highlights the maximal and fantastical force of Mother Nature through a critical and contemporary lens. A survey of recent projects will provide context to the development of the artists' practices, echoing the perpetual growth and transformation within and around us.

Known for his extravagantly avant-garde costume design, Machine Dazzle will create an immersive and site-specific installation based on looks from his future psyche-sex-adelic synth rock theatre production *Treasure*. This work explores Machine's relationship with his mother and serves as a foundation of experiences and beliefs established in the home. Considering architecture as our outermost garment to adorn, style, and reflect who we are, Machine will dress the interior of Wasserman Projects with his distinctive touch. Taking inspiration from nature and the tortoise shell as a protective garment, Machine will create a new series of wall-based sculptures with a maximal layering of found and organic materials.

Gracelee Lawrence's 3D-printed sculptures speak to complex relationships between food, the body, and technology. Creating hybrid human / animal / plant forms that explore the ways in which bodies are both gendered and metaphorically fragmented in terms of material desires, physical sustenance, and the digital spaces we inhabit. The vivid and playful colors in Lawrence's work subvert the macabre, while celebrating their deliciously tactile and seductive surfaces. Suspended elements, transformed figures, and a large-scale installation composed of numerous small sculptures will pepper the galleries.

"We are living in an era where the line between real and virtual is becoming further obscured," says Alison Wong, Director and Curator of Wasserman Projects, "This presents an exciting crossroad where we can venture into the place of endless possibility – intensely fertile ground for creativity and play. It also generates a primal pull back to the earth, to find connection, to seek simple and sustainable truths. Not only does their surrealist aesthetic float beautifully in this space, Dazzle's commitment to upcycling materials and Lawrence's use of vegetable-derived bioplastics promotes an ethical approach to the future with respect to our past and where we come from."

The Fall Fete, a ticketed VIP preview and annual Gala for Wasserman Projects Fund, will take place on Thursday, September 19th with a special performance by Machine Dazzle. The exhibition will open to the public with a reception in the presence of the artists on Saturday, September 21st, from 5-8pm.

ABOUT MACHINE DAZZLE

Machine Dazzle has been dazzling stages via costumes, sets, and performance since his arrival in New York in 1994. He has collaborated with artists Julie Atlas Muz, Big Art Group, Justin Vivian Bond, Taylor Mac, Chris Tanner, Soomi Kim, Pig Iron Theater, Bombay Rickey, and has designed projects for Opera Philadelphia and Spieglerworld. In addition, he has held residencies at Tyler School of Art at Temple University, Moody Center for the Arts at University of Houston, Wesleyan University, Harvard University's Theater, Dance & Media Department, and Mana Contemporary in Jersey City, NJ. Machine Dazzle's work has been exhibited at Parsons School of Design in New York City, and he contributed to memorable camp-themed looks for Diane von Furstenberg and Cara Delevingne at the 2019 Met Gala. His work for The Hang has been recognized with a 2022 Drama Desk Award nomination for Best Costumes for a Musical. He most recently exhibited *Ouroboros*—a three act installation and performance—at The University of Michigan Museum of Art. He is the winner of the 76th Creative Arts Emmy Award in the Outstanding Costumes for Variety, Nonfiction or Reality Programming Category. Machine Dazzle is represented by Pomegranate Arts.

ABOUT GRACELEE LAWRENCE

Gracelee (they/she) has attended twenty residencies in the US and abroad and opened her second solo show in New York at Postmasters in June 2022 with a glowing review by Roberta Smith in the New York Times. They are currently the Head of Sculpture Area at the University at Albany, SUNY. Recent exhibitions include Peter Gaugy (Vienna, Austria), PRIOR Art Space (Barcelona, Spain), Patrick Mikhail (Montreal, CA), Kavi Gupta (Chicago, IL), CHART (New York, NY), and more. They have installed large-scale outdoor sculptures at the Upstate Immersive (Poughkeepsie, NY), Wave Hill (Bronx, NY), Museum of Museums (Seattle, WA), Franconia Sculpture Park (Shafer, MN), Mary Sky (Hancock, VT), and others. They are a member of the collective MATERIAL GIRLS, a recipient of the 2024 Dr. Nuala McGann Drescher Leave, a 2021-22 Individual Artist DEC Grant, a 2019 Jerome Fellow at Franconia Sculpture Park, a 2016-17 Luce Scholars Fellow, and a recipient of the 2015 UMLAUF Prize. Press for their work includes The New York Times, The New Yorker, ArtNet, Hyperallergic, Artspace, The Creative Independent, and MAAKE Magazine, among others. They are an enthusiastic dancer, a lifelong horse person, and a passionate gardener.

ABOUT WASSERMAN PROJECTS

Wasserman Projects was conceived by Michigan-native Gary Wasserman and opened its doors in a former firehouse in Detroit's historic Eastern Market, one of the oldest and largest year-round markets in the U.S., in fall 2015. Guided by a spirit of collaboration, Wasserman Projects is a flexible and constantly evolving program of art, design, and music. Operating as a split for and not-for-profit organization, Wasserman Projects helps artists bring new projects to fruition and inspire discourse on art and issues that are particularly active and timely in Detroit. Our mission is to promote the work of outstanding practitioners based locally and around the globe by hosting exhibitions, facilitating conversations, and supporting creativity wherever we can be useful. Through collaborations and programming that generates interest, curiosity, and commerce, our goal is to become one of the many threads in the vibrant fabric that is Detroit.

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For further information, please contact:

Alison Wong
Director and Curator - Wasserman Projects, Detroit
aw@wassermanprojects.com / 313.818.3550