





WHITE FLAG LIBRARY

*Hannah Levy*

September 17 – October 29, 2016



Marie Heilich. You seem to have a penchant for perverting the old “form follows function” rule of design. Would you agree?

Hannah Levy. Yes, I’m borrowing the formal language of highly designed objects but they’re used in a context where they don’t make sense, or maybe we’re made unfamiliar with the function. In this way, the form becomes more apparent because it indicates an absurd function that raises questions. – the work can get quite kinky.

MH. Your recent work uses steel armatures and tinted silicone – as well as the works in the White Flag Library exhibition. These objects are so strange and yet you don’t stray far from the materials’ original purposes; you manipulate the steel rods with the logic and flare of a furniture designer, and as for the silicone vegetables, plants, bodies parts, and hybrids of organic matter, you use the same techniques of makeup artists.

HL. I started getting into fruits and vegetables when I was looking at systems of display and food seemed to always engage with systems of display in a very synthetic way. Like how all of the stems get lined up and ugly fruits get hidden. I’ve been working with asparagus for a long time. I like it because its original size is so digit-like but if you change the size or color they become even more like appendages — I’m working on some now that are arm sized. But I think mostly my attraction to the asparagus comes from its creepy symptom – that it makes your pee smell weird.

With the steel structures, they’re a combination of forms like gym equipment, medical equipment, furniture etc. I think the curves that I use in the metal pieces and with Plexi make fun of the way curves exist in contemporary design. A lot of signage and handrails have those curves and you can tell that someone made the decision to put a bit of sexiness into a rail or something and I like to push that to a point of humor, make it more apparent.

MH. I love how dependent you make the materials on one another as they interact too. I’m thinking of your work that resembles a steel baby highchair that has a beige inner tube wrapped around. One object isn’t dominant. it’s about interplay.

HL. This tension of two materials, to strain against each other, is a very basic sculptural strategy, and its one that I love to play with. Although there are often pulling or pushing against each other, I like to try give the conflicting forms a similar affect. Sometimes you’re cupping or holding and sometimes materials turn against each other and can be violent. When you’re working with silicone every pinch, every stretch, you can feel looking at it - that consistency is part of you.

MH. I also wanted to talk about this color of dirty pink that shows up often in your work. It’s been used aggressively in the past few years to market to a specific female consumer; the sweet-heart feminist that can critique and own her Barbie pink dream world.

HL. Yes, I’m definitely attracted to that color, but I’m also skeptical of it. I started working with pink and beige when I was working with pleather. I was interested in beige because it’s ubiquitous in American interior spaces; beiges walls, beige couch, beige carpet, everything beige. I think that color is pretty sinister so I find it interesting to blend this “sad causation beige” with a “lollypop sex-toy pink”.

MH. Haha - Yes. They’re undoubtedly domestic and scaled to the body, but also the materials stimulate in a way that’s beyond visual, they’re sensorial.

HL. The ubiquity of both colors says something really sinister about America’s relationship to whiteness.

### Checklist

Hannah Levy

*Untitled*, 2016

Nickel-plated steel, silicone, 65 x 32 x 24 inches

Courtesy the artist

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*Untitled*, 2016

Nickel-plated steel, silicone, 18 x 27 ½ x 18 inches

Courtesy the artist

Hannah Levy

*Untitled*, 2016

Polished marble, silicone, 9 x 10 x 1 inches

Courtesy the artist

### About the Artist

Hannah Levy has held solo exhibitions with Galerie Parisa Kind, Frankfurt; Allen and Eldridge at James Fuentes Gallery, New York; and Galerie Parisa Kind Deuxième Bureau, Frankfurt. She has participated in group exhibitions with 247365, New York; Carroll/Fletcher, London; Kunstverein Wiesen; Interstate Projects, Brooklyn; Rear Window, New York; Museum Für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt; Wellwellwell, Vienna; Fiebach Minninger, Cologne; and MX Gallery, New York. Levy holds a Meisterschüler title from Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main. Levy lives and works in New York.

Organized by Marie Heilich

Lender

Courtesy the artist

White Flag Projects

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