

Press Release

GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS

Louise Lawler

November 10, 2023–February 10, 2024

Public Reception: November 9, 4–7pm

Sprüth Magers, Los Angeles

Sprüth Magers

Louise Lawler examines the conditions, procedures, presentations and boundaries of art. Her photographs and interventions analyze the contextual production of meaning as well as the infinitude of context. Monika Sprüth and Philomene Magers are pleased to announce *GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS*, an exhibition of mostly new works by the artist at the Los Angeles gallery. Presenting pieces from her *swiped*, *adjusted-to-fit*, and *traced* series, Lawler investigates art history as well as her own work and questions both institutional and artistic authority.

GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS coalesces around the idea of movement and disorientation, which has been a throughline in Lawler's four-decade-long practice of photographing artworks in public and private collections, at auctions, or in storage. Displayed on the gallery's first floor are several new *swiped* works, which are produced by a physical gesture in space; Lawler uses long exposures and swift camera movements to create abstract images of well-known motifs. Frozen yet moving, they become transcendent images that perpetually blur and shift, taking her longstanding investigation into the making and viewing of meaning still further. Their subtitles, "swiped," might be a humorous comment on the artist's practice of capturing the works of others whilst further evoking the contemporary consumption of digital pictures on our screens – perhaps speaking to the feelings of loss of focus and clarity under the constant exposure to a deluge of pictures.

Operating within certain structures, Lawler often displaces or redirects power and attention. In a growing body of works, her methodology involves continuously revisiting and restaging her own works by transferring them to different formats and materials, often allowing for external influences to shape what is seen. For her *adjusted-to-fit* works, she re-presents the original image by permitting it to be digitally altered for each installation, stretching it to match the aspect ratio of a given wall. Its shape, size and position are out of the artist's hands and are determined instead by the institution or collector displaying them, indicating the numerous influences on the procedures of presentation and reception.

In the upstairs gallery, Lawler's photographs are translated into large-scale tracings, black-and-white line versions of her photos, which are produced with children's book illustrator Jon Buller. They may or may not be punctuated by additional mounted

photographs.

GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS is inextricably linked to questions related to institutional framing, but it is also profoundly self-reflexive, ambivalent and contradictory. Bringing together pieces that are connected by varying degrees of analogue and digital movement, confusion and reversal, the show turns viewers' heads in multiple directions. Exploring the artist's role, Lawler, at times, confounds our understanding of authorship and questions how we look at works of art, how they come to have meaning, the desires invested in these objects, their interactions and their temporality. This press release is written before the installation.

Louise Lawler (*1947, New York) lives and works in New York. Solo exhibitions include Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago (2019), Sammlung Verbund, Vienna (2018), MoMA, New York (2017), Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2013), Albertinum, Dresden (2012), Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio (2006), Dia:Beacon, New York (2005), and Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel (2004). Selected group exhibitions include Fondazione Prada, Venice, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Museum Brandhorst, Munich, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MoMA, New York, MoMA PS1, New York, MUMOK, Vienna, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, and the Whitney Museum, New York, which additionally featured the artist in its 1991, 2000, and 2008 biennials. Her work was also included in the 59th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia (2022).

Sprüth Magers

For further information and press inquiries, please contact Claire Rifej
(claire@spruethmagers.com).