

**Sarah Rosalena Brady**

***Above Below***

**Organized by Mika Yoshitake**

**Blum & Poe, Los Angeles  
February 10 – March 10, 2021**

**Instagram Live with Sarah Rosalena Brady and Mika Yoshitake: Friday, February 19, 1pm PST**

February 9, 2021, Los Angeles—For its contribution to Galleries Curate: *RHE*, Blum & Poe is pleased to present *Above Below*, an exhibition of new work by Los Angeles-based artist Sarah Rosalena Brady. This show marks Brady's first solo presentation with Blum & Poe.

Sarah Rosalena Brady is a multi-racial Huichol and Laguna Pueblo interdisciplinary artist who works with artificial intelligence, indigenous craft, and issues of decolonial posthumanism. She integrates ancient indigenous techniques with artificial neural networks to examine the geopolitical impacts of climate change and the exploitation of natural resources via space colonization. Interrogating the inherently biased power structures at the root of surveillance technology and imperialist knowledge production (i.e., how cartography and military mapping are trained to exploit black and brown bodies), which is also used to document and map outer space, Brady re-trains those very machines to deconstruct and analyze images of systemic power.

Brady's double-sided textile series, *Above Below* (2020), is made using Jacquard looms that are programmed (one pixel per thread) to weave satellite reconnaissance images that project and reshape ice on Mars from a neural network inside Earth. The images reflect planetary changes in water and climate over millions of years captured from above and below. Resulting in distorted and broken pixels and boundaries between the Blue (desertification) and the Red (exploitation), a web of the past and future geographies.

Brady's ceramic series, *Transposing a Form* (2020), explores indigenous coiling techniques and 3D printing using printed Enhanced Mojave Mars Simulant 2 (MMS-2), a chemically enriched blend of Mars regolith (Martian soil). Minerals found in clay deposits on Mars reflect the presence of water—the essence of life and power—and the potential for microbial life, which is heavily sought after by rovers and intelligent machines in search of future habitats—the next interpreter or mediator in the language of forms. The forms are a hybrid of the Black Hole and Puebloan vessel that incorporate breakages known as “spirit lines,” where the spirit can enter and exit the object, making it a living entity.

These series will be complemented by Brady's work, *Virus Tumbleweed* (2020), sharp, tentacular objects which are 3D prints of a virus simulation model. The work is inspired in part by Elizabeth Povinelli's *Geontologies: A Requiem to Late Liberalism* (2016), which presents the virus as the ultimate terrorist with universal control over “Life” and “Nonlife” by radically altering its state. As we are experiencing now with the COVID-19 pandemic, the virus replicates, lies dormant as it mutates, and adjusts to its different environments. Theorized as one of the earliest life-forms on earth, the virus is a reminder of the non-hierarchical co-existence of “Life” and “Nonlife” forms,

and the vulnerability and interconnectedness of human bodies. Today, space missions are looking for viruses on exoplanets, signaling an internal political other, as suggested by Povinelli: “environmentalists inhabiting the borderlands between activists and terrorists across state borders and interstate surveillance.” By integrating machine learning with traditional fiber art and indigenous ceramic techniques, Brady’s hybrid objects expose critical gaps between space colonization and climate justice.

On February 19, 2021, Blum & Poe will host an Instagram Live conversation to coincide with the arrival of the Perseverance rover and Ingenuity helicopter—the first powered aircraft to land on Mars. Sarah Rosalena Brady and Mika Yoshitake will talk about these arrivals, which aim to search for signs of ancient microbial life, characterize the planet’s geology and climate, collect carefully selected and documented rock and sediment samples for possible return to Earth, and pave the way for human exploration beyond the Moon. Giving examples from Brady’s practice, this conversation will focus on the potential presence of microbial life and water on Mars, and their role as incentives for space colonization in response to climate change.

**Sarah Rosalena Brady** is an interdisciplinary artist and researcher based in Los Angeles. Her work deconstructs technology with material interventions, creating new narratives for hybrid objects that function between human/nonhuman, ancient/future, handmade/autonomous to override power structures rooted in colonialism. They collapse binaries and borders, creating new epistemologies between Earth and Space. She is Assistant Professor of Art at UC Santa Barbara in Computational Craft and Haptic Media. She was recently given the LACMA Art + Tech Lab Grant; the Steve Wilson Award from Leonardo, the International Society for the Arts, Sciences, and Technology; and the Craft Futures Grant from Center for Craft. Her research focuses on Indigenous scholarship and mentorship in STEAM, and she is multiracial Huichol and Laguna Pueblo. She has presented her work at places such as LACMA, Studio for Creative Inquiry, Getty Museum, the de Young Museum, Navel, New Wight Gallery, Ars Electronica, and SOMArts Cultural Center.

**Galleries Curate** is an informal group of contemporary galleries from around the world, formed as a result of the universally felt global crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. The coalition focuses on a supportive sense of community and cooperative interactions through collaborative exhibitions designed to express the dynamic dialogue between our individual programs. *RHE* is the first chapter of this collaboration, an exhibition and website themed around a universal and, we hope, unifying subject: water. Like culture, water is never static but always in flux.

### **About Blum & Poe**

Blum & Poe was founded by Timothy Blum and Jeffrey Poe in Santa Monica in September of 1994 as a space to show local and international contemporary art in all media. Blum’s extensive experience in the Japanese art world combined with Poe’s keen knowledge of emerging artists in Los Angeles, together resulted in an international program of influential artists. Throughout a twenty-six-year history, Blum & Poe has shaped the trajectory of contemporary art by championing artists at all stages of their careers—cultivating the lineages that run between emerging and established practices, and working with artist estates to generate new discourse surrounding historical work.

In 2003 the gallery moved to a larger space in Culver City, and in 2009 Blum & Poe purchased and renovated its current 22,000 square foot complex on La Cienega Boulevard. In this location the gallery has since held museum-caliber surveys, examining the historical work of such movements as the Japanese Mono-ha school (2012); the Korean Dansaekhwa monochrome painters (2014); the European postwar movement CoBrA (2015); Japanese art of 1980s and '90s (2019); a rereading of Brazilian Modernism (2019); and a revisionist take on the 1959 MoMA exhibition, *New Images of Man* (2020). To produce these exhibitions, Blum & Poe has worked with celebrated curators such as Joan Kee, Mika Yoshitake, Sofia Gotti, and Alison M. Gingeras.

In 2014, Blum & Poe opened galleries in New York and Tokyo to focus on intimately scaled projects in tandem with an expansive program of exhibitions, lectures, performance series, screenings, and an annual art book fair at its base in Los Angeles. In 2015, Blum & Poe was certified as an Arts:Earth Partnership (AEP) green art gallery and consequently became one of the first green certified galleries in the United States. Blum & Poe's own publishing division focuses on sharing aspects of its program via original scholarship and accessible media ranging from academic monographs, audio series, magazines, and artists' books. In 2020, the gallery launched Blum & Poe Broadcasts, an online platform showcasing artists' projects in conjunction with physical installations or as standalone digital endeavors.

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