

The approach

Sara Cwynar *Baby Blue Benzo*

23 April - 7 June 2026

Preview: Wednesday 22 April, 6-9pm

The Approach is pleased to present *Baby Blue Benzo* by Sara Cwynar, her second exhibition at the gallery. Presented in the main space, *Baby Blue Benzo* (2024) is a major video installation shot on both digital and 16mm film, shown at a monumental panoramic scale. In parallel, a selection of accompanying photographs are exhibited in The Annexe set against wallpaper designed by the artist.

Baby Blue Benzo (2024) begins with the Mercedes Benz 300SLR, the most expensive car ever sold at auction (2022, 135 million euros) – and expands this object into a research film about the arbitrariness of value and the role of photography in capitalism as a generator of desire. Cwynar incorporates filmed representations of herself in the Benz, of hired models and crew, and of friends and collaborators like the graphic designer Tracy Ma. This amalgamation of images, all shown at varying scales, is unveiled in a continuous horizontal scroll across an extra-wide screen, a new animation style that Cwynar developed for the film.

In the film, Cwynar connects the Benz to benzodiazepines, medications commonly prescribed for anxiety and insomnia – conditions which the artist has experienced herself. She links heightened states of wakefulness to the continuous hum of twenty-first-century life, tracing a parallel between the emergence of photography and the development of the Fordist assembly line. Both, she suggests, reshaped how modern subjects understand themselves in relation to productivity, consumption and image.

At its core, the film explores surrealism, sleeplessness, and late capitalism as a kind of dream state where a constant stream of images and information – encountered through phones and everyday experience – resembles a state once unimaginable outside of sleep. It considers design, fashion, beauty and desire, positioning sleep as perhaps the only remaining autonomous space beyond the reach of technology.

The framed works featured in The Annexe extend these themes: a reworked image of the eighteenth-century porcelain sculpture *The Disturbed Slumber*, chosen for its proximity to the early Industrial Revolution, becomes a surface for collage and text related to insomnia. Other images include a pregnant woman, a counterfeit Rolex watch, a tired-looking Pink Panther doll in a shop window, a pink peony, a model reclining beside a life-sized wooden replica of the Benz, and a collage built over an archival photograph of a doll modelling early French fashion. These works form part of Cwynar's ongoing research reflecting on the evolution of consumption, drawing parallels with contemporary e-commerce aesthetics.

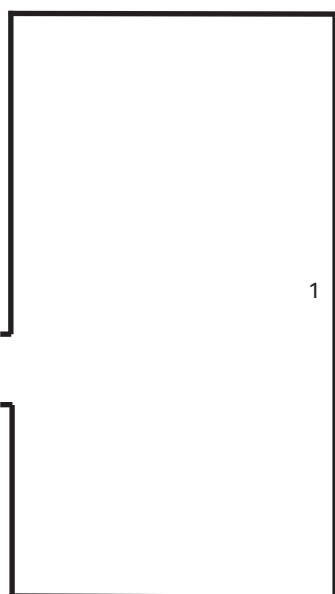
The film concludes with a line from Roland Barthes's *The Fashion System* (1967), in which the ideal woman of fashion embodies a set of contradictions (demure and determined, tender and tough), offering a fantasy of totality in which one can be everything at once, without having to choose. In fashion, the subject becomes both impossible and entirely legible.

Cwynar's work engages with these unattainable ideals - the images and fantasies that sustain cycles of desire, circulating through celebrities, commodities, and identities that feel within reach yet remain perpetually out of grasp, existing most fully as photographs or as lines of advertising.

Sara Cwynar (b. 1985, Vancouver, Canada) lives and works in New York, USA. She earned her Bachelor of Design from York University, Toronto, in 2010 and her MFA from Yale University in 2016. Cwynar was a recipient of the 2025 Guggenheim Foundation Award, the 2020 Sobey Art Award, and the 2020 Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award. Her work is held in major international collections, including Fondazione Prada, Milan; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, among others.

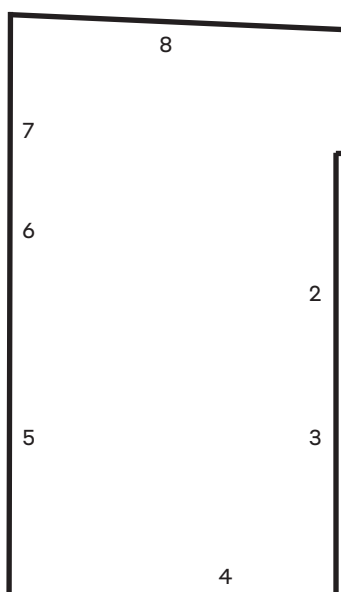
Recent solo exhibitions include: *Baby Blue Benzo Beta*, MOCA Toronto, CA (forthcoming 2026); *Alphabet*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (MA), USA (2025); *Baby Blue Benzo*, 52 Walker, New York (NY), USA (2024); *S/S 23*, Foam Fotografiemuseum, Amsterdam, NL (2023); *Apple Red/Grass Green/Sky Blue*, ICA, Los Angeles (CA), USA (2022); *Glass Life*, Foxy Production, New York (NY), USA (2021); *Marilyn*, The Approach, London, UK (2020).

Recent group exhibitions include: *part of being alive*, Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson (NY), USA (2026); *Does the flower hear the bee?*, Shanghai Biennale, The Power Station of Art, Shanghai, CN; *The Lure of the Image*, Fotomuseum Winterthur, Winterthur, CH; *A Rose Is*, FLAG Art Foundation, New York (NY), USA (all 2025); *Objects of Desire: Photography and the Language of Advertising*, LACMA, Los Angeles (LA), USA (2022); *L'Image et son double*, Centre Pompidou, Paris, FR; *Off the Record*, Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA (both 2021).



Main Gallery

1. *Baby Blue Benzo*, 2024
Anamorphic video projection, digital video and 16mm film transferred to video
21 minutes, sound
Overall dimensions variable
2. *Fake Rolex Oyster Perpetual Milgauss, China*, 2026
Archival pigment print in custom screen printed frame
78.4 x 63 x 7.5 cm
3. *Doll Index, 1791-1950*, 2026
Archival pigment print in custom screen printed frame
76.2 x 61 cm
4. *Pregnant*, 2026
Archival pigment print in custom screen printed frame
78 x 98.5 x 7.5 cm
5. *Pink Panther Mother*, 2025
Archival pigment print in custom screen printed frame
78.4 x 63 x 7.5 cm



The Annexe

6. *Lihem with Mercedes Benz 300 SLR*, 2026
Archival pigment print in custom screen printed frame
78.1 x 103.4 x 7.5 cm
7. *The Disturbed Slumber, 1760*, 2026
Archival pigment print in custom screen printed frame
78 x 98.5 x 7.5 cm
8. *Peach Peony*, 2026
Archival pigment print in custom screen printed frame
78.4 x 63 x 7.5 cm

In the office:

Rococo Ferrari, 2024
Archival pigment print
183.5 x 129.5 x 5 cm