



Top left image: *Holding MY Finger On This Moving Body Of Water Until The V-shaped Ripple I Created is Permanently Etched Into Its Surface*, 16" x 24" Pigment Print, 2012-2021

Top right image: *Attempt To Disappear Into Where My Driveway Meets The Street*, 20" x 30" Pigment print, 2020

Bottom left image: *Holding MY Finger On This Moving Body Of Water Until The V-shaped Ripple I Created is Permanently Etched Into Its Surface*, 16" x 24" Pigment Print, 2012-2021

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Contact: Caetlynn Booth, cb@caetlynnbooth.com

Exhibition can be previewed: <https://www.reservoirstudios.nyc/>

Conduit Gallery at Reservoir Studios, 659 Woodward Avenue, Ridgewood, NY

June 4 – August 6, 2022

May 18, 2022 - Ridgewood, Queens -- Conduit Gallery at Reservoir Studios is excited to present new work by the artist Richard Haley in the forthcoming show *Inhabiting the Space Underneath this Skin: Things to do in between practicing sleeping and making breathing a voluntary action. Part 2: Voyage toward self-discovery as an incandescent vessel*, on view from June 4, 2022 until August 6, 2022. The opening reception will take place June 4th from 5-7pm at Conduit Gallery, located at 659 Woodward Avenue.

Richard Haley has been working with process oriented, body-based themes for the past 20 years. One result of the pandemic is our heightened collective awareness of the fragility of life, and of our mortality, and Haley's artistic pursuits and the resulting photographs documenting his explorations possess a visceral relevancy. They are unabashedly uncanny, with an initially shocking surreality in the recognition of something almost human, and then upon further scrutiny, the realization that they are human cast-offs, molded bodies or body parts, that act as stand-ins for the artist.

Among Haley's artistic-spiritual forebearers is the artist Bruce Nauman. Other influences are Robert Gober, Ana Mendieta, and Cindy Sherman. A signature aphorism of Nauman's is that "The true artist is an amazing luminous fountain," and many of Haley's works speak to enacting or performing this idea, however "inadequately," as a rite of passage into the sacred space of a sentient human being, embodying oneself, bumping up against the limits of permanence, desire, perseverance and attempts at transcendence. The actions captured by the photographic lens become an act of practice, meditation, and contemplation. With a playful flourish, Nauman's "amazing luminous fountain" becomes Haley's "incandescent vessel" through which he embarks upon his voyage.

There is a poeticism to Haley's titles, including within the show title, "Things to do in between practicing sleeping and making breathing a voluntary action," as if we had a choice in consciously engaging in either of these autonomically fundamental actions. There is a profound sadness in perceiving that we will all spend our lives perfecting sleeping and breathing, the ultimate unfolding rehearsal, all to graduate into death, where neither of these skills, or any others learned in living, can be employed. It definitely scares one into the present moment in a hurry, and makes "the journey is the destination" all of our mantras.

There is a kind of pithy grieving taking place as the constraints of material, time, the body, natural elements, and science disproving magic, assert their ultimate conceptual dominance in these photographs. The story they tell speaks of the desire to fully understand what it is to inhabit a body, and the fleeting glimpses of perceptions, like footnotes to a life lived, through these at times purposefully overwrought fill-ins.

There is a vulnerability yet also an irreverence; a deadpan seriousness about irreverence as a protective system for out-witting death, or the idea of death from weighing one down too much. Is Haley audacious, or merely playfully creepy, or grotesquely supernatural? There is no way to fake mapping the reach and constraints of the body when imbuing this knowledge to oneself, and this honesty feels potent when one's stated goal is literally impossible to achieve, forcing the focus then onto the artist and his particular, idiosyncratic method of figuring out how far the reach goes and how constrained the constraints are. In so doing, it further defines the specific peculiarities of the individual, cumulatively acting as a self-portrait.

In this range of photographs depicting vignettes of his own replicas in action, Haley touches on an attraction to the elements: air, water, earth, and wanting to know something of their substance on a tactile level; the process of self-discovery; and ultimately, a contemplation about what it is to be alive.

Detroit based artist Richard Haley's practice is focused through lens- based technologies, using the fluid undefinable nature of photography to explore notions of being. The exhibited works are from Haley's "Rehearsal" series, an ongoing series where surrogates and stand-ins for Haley perform actions and mundane tasks mapping the reach and constraints of the body.

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