

# ULTERIOR

Camel Collective, Douglas Goldberg, and Carrie Yamaoka

*Voices*

January 27–March 6, 2021



Douglas Goldberg, *Microphone*, 2010  
Alabaster, 14 x 15 x 15 inches / 35.6 x 38.1 x 38.1 cm

Political art should serve to promote empathy. That's a dream in the form of a declarative statement, not a fact. But let's entertain the delusion that politics is the science of how we collectivize progress, and not just a tool majorities employ to suppress difference. And as long as we're entertaining fables, let us further imagine that all of us have an equal claim to politics' benefits. Not the all of us envisioned in the American Constitution, not even after passage of the 14th, 15th, and 19th amendments. Or the one enshrined in law, not even after passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Or even the all of us established by the invalidation of the Defense of Marriage Act of 1996. But actually all of us.

The network of disparities separating the facades of freedom within which we operate and the difficulty of achieving true freedom of conscience and expression is so vast that it is hard to see. But the political dimension of what we share and conceal, by choice and under threat, is inescapable. As is the question of where the authority to speak and the right to be heard are vested, though they are as innate as breathing and being. In "Voices" these questions echo around in spaces where individual rights are defined against perceptions of the public good.

Historically, sculpture has tended to express power, not support pluralism. The legacy of Greco-Roman art—from depictions of heroes' sacrifices to the inexorable resolve of rulers and deities—is primarily political speech of the coercive kind. Douglas Goldberg's veiled polished alabaster *Microphone*, representing the ghost of public oration, should bring that history immediately and viscerally to mind. Like antecedents such as Man Ray's *The Enigma of Isidore Ducasse* (1920), an archetype of the fearful allure of the unknown, *Microphone* is a public statement of private uncertainty. Visually hushed, it suggests something about the transparent fragility of the public self and its assertions.

Drawn from contemporaneous sources, the whispered slurs in Carrie Yamaoka's two chemically redacted silver gelatin prints overlap where individual freedom meets the power of the state. "Her hair was quite short" is a brutal bit of innuendo from *The Well of Loneliness*, the first explicitly lesbian novel in English and a still-trenchant document of the struggle to be heard. The penultimate paragraph of the novel reads "And now there was only one voice, one demand; her own voice into which those millions had entered. A voice like the awful, deep rolling of thunder; a demand like the gathering together of great waters. A terrifying voice that made her ears throb, that

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made her brain throb, that shook her very entrails, until she must stagger and all but fall beneath this appalling burden of sound that strangled her in its will to be uttered.”

How sharply the intended viciousness of that personal accusation “Lesbian!” contrasts with “Runs like a red thread,” a line from Vladimir Lenin’s *The State and Revolution*. Like its explicit equivalent, “Communist!,” this public label (used in condemnation and praise), still almost without equal in public life, is so loaded that it doesn’t even appear in some translations. Here it also evokes the trickle of blood that seems so inextricably intertwined with the history of the struggle to define just relationships between citizens and governments.

In many places the color of the cane a visually impaired person carries—usually white, sometimes with red stripes—is mandated by law. These personal mobility devices are treated, in other words, as a form of legally regulated speech. When employed in its official sense, such a cane typically grants a universal right of way. Some canes fold for convenience—suggesting, perhaps, more personal control than they actually convey. All of this is framed in Camel Collective’s *The View From Our Present Location* and three new works carrying the same title, *Folding mobility cane for the visually impaired containing... (The Distance from Pontresina to Zermatt Is the Same as from Zermatt to Pontresina)*, each of which is additionally loaded with a variety of potentially active physical agents no one but the holder can “see.”

—Dakin Hart, Senior Curator, The Noguchi Museum

**Camel Collective** (Anthony Graves b. 1975, South Bend, IN; Carla Herrera-Prats b. 1973–d. 2019, Mexico City) has exhibited and performed works at institutions in the US and abroad including *The Queens Biennial: Volumes*, New York (2019); Centro Cultural Universitario Tlatelolco, Mexico (2019); El Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City (2017); REDCAT Gallery, Los Angeles (2015); Trienal de Artes Frestas, Sesc, Sorocaba, Brazil (2015); The Bard Hessel Museum, Annendale-on-Hudson, New York (2014); Casa del Lago, Mexico City (2013); Trienal Poli/Gráfica de San Juan, Puerto Rico (2012); MASS MoCA, North Adams, Massachusetts (2011); and Aarhus Kunsthalle, Denmark (2010). Camel Collective’s works are held in public and private collections including The Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo and Kadist Art Foundation.

**Douglas Goldberg** (b.1971, Englewood, NJ) received a MFA from Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), Baltimore, MD in 1999. For the past seventeen years he has lived and worked in Brooklyn, NY. He has participated in many group exhibitions, including most recently *Beautiful Object* at Jeffrey Leder Gallery in Long Island City, NY (2016); *Prime Matter* at the Laholm Drawing Museum in Sweden (2015); and *Matters of the Jugular* at SUGAR, Brooklyn, NY (2016). His first solo exhibition was mounted at Ulterior Gallery in 2017, and the gallery also presented Goldberg’s sculptures at the Armory Show 2020.

**Carrie Yamaoka** (b.1957 Glen Cove, NY) has exhibited her work in the US and Europe since the 1990s. Yamaoka’s first solo museum exhibition, *recto/verso*, took place at the Henry Art Gallery in Seattle in 2019. Yamaoka is the recipient of a 2019 Guggenheim Fellowship and a 2017 Anonymous Was a Woman Award. Recent solo exhibitions include *pour crawl cast peel* at Commonwealth and Council, Los Angeles, California (2020), *Panorama* at Ulterior (2019) and Lucien Terras, New York, NY (2015). Her work has been featured in exhibitions at Centre Pompidou, Paris (2020), Transmitter NYC (2019), Galerie Crevecoeur, Marseille (2018), and *arms ache avid aeon: Nancy Brooks Brody / Joy Episalla / Zoe Leonard / Carrie Yamaoka: fierce pussy amplified, chapters 1-4* at Beeler Gallery, CCAD, Columbus, Ohio, and chapter 5 at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia (2018–2019), the Bronx Museum (2016) and Greater New York 2015 at MoMA/PS1. She is a founding member of the queer art collective fierce pussy.

## About the Gallery:

Ulterior Gallery is an emerging art gallery on the Lower East Side of New York City. Established by Takako Tanabe, a Japanese gallerist originally from Tokyo, Ulterior is committed to the exhibition of works by an intergenerational array of artists of diverse cultures and backgrounds. Ulterior Gallery is located at 172 Attorney St. between Houston and Stanton on the Lower East Side. Gallery Hours are Wednesday through Saturday, noon to 6 pm, and by appointment. For further inquiries, please contact Takako Tanabe: [takako@ulteriorgallery.com](mailto:takako@ulteriorgallery.com).