

A.I.R.

Traditionally Unnurturing Nurture Aika Akhmetova

April 23 - May 23, 2021

GALLERY II



Aika Akhmetova, *Hole in the Window*, 2020, video still.

“She used to be bewitched by the daughter of her mother, by her daughter of her mother, by her mother of her daughter, by the granddaughter of her grandma, but that’s enough.”

A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to announce *Traditionally Unnurturing Nurture*, a solo exhibition by 2020-2021 A.I.R. Fellow Aika Akhmetova. The exhibition troubles our understanding of home as a site of safety and comfort by situating the viewer within an interior in which everything functional is made dysfunctional and every surface rejects and distorts the body.

Touching upon themes of identity, tradition, dissociation, and abuse, *Traditionally Unnurturing Nurture* features a series of sculptural works made from objects found in a typical household: mirrors, window frames, bed slats, carpets. The functionality of these familiar objects, however, is purposefully twisted: the bathroom mirror is broken and partially transparent, revealing its intimate contents; the bathroom shag rug is infested with sunflower seed shells; the bedroom carpet is encrusted with acupressure spike mats (impossibly painful to lay on but wonderful for blood flow). But as Akhmetova attests, these violent modifications are done always “out of love.”

Mirrored and reflective surfaces feature prominently in the works. Within the exhibition, viewers catch themselves and others reflected in the trappings of home, forced to relive Lacan’s mirror stage by registering or failing to register their own reflection. The effect is a splintering of the self, a hyper awareness of appearance and presence. *Traditionally Unnurturing Nurture* extends its arms, welcoming its guests just close enough to give them a good slap—perhaps too out of love.

Aika Akhmetova is a New York-based artist, originally from Almaty, Kazakhstan. Akhmetova studied Painting at Rhode Island School of Design and holds an MFA in Visual Arts from Columbia University. Akhmetova has exhibited in the US and Kazakhstan. Their work has been included in exhibitions *Soft Windows*, Public Swim, NY; *In Response: We Fight to Build a Free World*, Jewish Museum, NY; and *Alone Together*, Steve Turner, LA. Their work most recently has been published in *The Archive*, issue no. 68, “Intersectionality” by Leslie Lohman Museum (curated by Pamela Sneed) and *Lines Inside* by TSA_PDF (edited and compiled by Roni Aviv, Lizzy De Vita.)

A.I.R. Gallery is wheelchair accessible via ramp. There are accessible toilets in the venue. There is comfortable seating with backs. Free tap water is available. The venue is nearest to the F train at York St (0.2 miles) and the A train at High St (0.5 miles). The nearest wheelchair accessible trains are the B, Q, R at Dekalb Av (1.1 miles) and the 2, 3 at Borough Hall (0.8 miles). The roads immediately surrounding the gallery are cobblestone. The nearest accessible parking garage (for an hourly fee) is two blocks away at 100 Jay St. No ID necessary for entry. Please contact info@airgallery.org for more information.

