

Shelter

What if Ants Were Big

Marge Rendell & Tristan Martinez

February 10 – March 12, 2022

Shelter is pleased to present **What If Ants Were Big**, showcasing the works of Marge Rendell and Tristan Martinez. This two-person exhibition plunges us into the investigation of commodity, standards of beauty, consumerism, and the understanding of labor through levity and exploration of materials. Showing mixed media, screenprint, and photography, this exhibition communicates the fleeting and the temporary. Bridging the lines of the physically constructed and the metaphorically constructed, this aestheticized commentary poses the question **What If Ants Were Big** – using ants as an allegory for everyday life.

Marge Rendell (b. 1998) is a printmaker, photographer, and painter based in New York, NY. She received her BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2020. Through labor, obsession, and rumination her work gives value to the disposable. Looking at systems of commodification she plays between the space of fine art and advertisement. Making overly attractive, desirable, and shiny objects that all fall into ideas of irony, self and world criticality, and identity, she forces her viewer to question society's inherent identity as a consumer.

Tristan Martinez (b. 1996 in Los Angeles, CA) based in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, is an interdisciplinary artist, mainly working in photography. With a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Tristan's work focuses on the aesthetics of late stage capitalism while exploring themes of labor, accessibility, and representation. Through formal decisions, Tristan constructs ambiguous narratives that transcend individual identity and defy direct placement. Hyper focused on the banal aspects of daily life, his works challenge the viewer to make sense of what it is they are looking at and how that perception allows for meaning to form. Tristan has recently appeared in *The Big Show*, at *My Pet Ram*, NY, *Homecoming*, at James Kenney Campus Gallery Trenton, NJ, *You Thought To Think?*, at The Latent Space, Chicago, IL and *Color 2020*, at CICA Museum, Gyeonggi-do, South Korea.

There are 1.6 million ants to every 1 person.