

***Rakish Exhibition(ist)***  
sculpture by Michele Rushfeldt  
with a photograph by Robert Mapplethorpe

opens Saturday, January 23, 2021, 12-6pm  
through February 28

*...the rituals of “aesthetic” submission in our culture speak a language so closely analogous to those of sexual and spiritual submission that they are all but indistinguishable...*

-Dave Hickey, *Invisible Dragon*

In *Rakish Exhibition(ist)*, sculptor Michele Rushfeldt installs seven recent works in conjunction with Robert Mapplethorpe’s photograph, *Tulips*, from 1988.

Similar to Mapplethorpe’s coded flower investigations, Rushfeldt’s sculptures take liberties with form, punning on abstractions that rhyme with the human body. When installed along with this photograph, the sculptures inhabit the room like an erotic party, replete with instruments and tools, executed in a wide variety of materials from hard steel to pliant latex and bondage tape. Many of the sculptures are bedazzled with rhinestones, lending a glint of camp to their otherwise earnest endeavors.

Rushfeldt’s kink is wholesome community with a full range of expressed characters all affecting a proclivity for pose. The work is exuberant and active while remaining minimal and elegant; however, most importantly, and radically, there is a break with day-to-day verticality as Rushfeldt’s sculptures bend and groan (and sometimes crawl) to the power of the artist’s tensile imagination.

The room is alive with these performing objects that pay homage by submitting to the black and white tone of Mapplethorpe’s bouquet of bowed flowers, sleek in raking light and emitting severe shadows, a give and take animated by the master’s voyeuristic uber-lens. Arranged before his *Tulips*, with consent, the presented sculptures go many ways, sometimes deceptive, often sharp, yet, always rakish, even under the utmost artistic pressure to behave.

---

**Michele Rushfeldt** is a visual artist living and working in Brooklyn, NY. Her three-dimensional work focuses on sexuality and kink, representing over-performative bodies, and depicting a variety of elegant, glittering, dripping, and twisting sculptures and panels - characters in the midst of their sexual 'acts.' Materials take on a dominant role. Latex, rope, harnesses, steel, fabrics, and paints create dimensional forms that feel and look like the materials they employ: Stretchy, tense, balancing, caked with glitter, bulging, and translucent. Her works embrace the humorous and peculiar aspects of exhibitionism, suggesting skin, bodily fluids, and voyeurism. Each piece or grouping encapsulates a tense balance, with harder materials hanging on softer ones and a dependence on the architecture for submissive support. Originally from Minneapolis, MN, Rushfeldt obtained her BFA in painting from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco in 2012, then her MFA from Pratt Institute in 2019. Her work has been exhibited nationally, including galleries in California, Washington, D.C., and New York. She is currently a resident artist at Art Cake in Brooklyn.

**Robert Mapplethorpe** is one of America's preeminent twentieth century photographers. He lived from 1946 to 1989.

image: composite of Mapplethorpe's *Tulips* over a detail of Rushfeldt's *High Sticking*.



Cathouse Proper @ 524 Projects  
524 Court Street, 2nd floor  
(enter Huntington St.)  
Brooklyn, NY 11231

Thursday-Sunday, 12-6PM  
F/G to Smith & 9th St.

for more information, press and sales inquires  
contact David Dixon  
david@cathouseproper.com  
646.729.4682  
cathouseproper.com

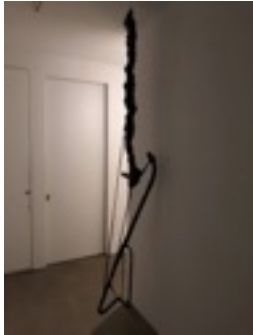
Check List:

***Rakish Exhibition(ist)***

sculpture by Michele Rushfeldt  
with a photograph by Robert Mapplethorpe  
January 23 - February 28, 2021



Cathouse Proper @ 524 Projects  
Contact David Dixon  
[david@cathouseproper.com](mailto:david@cathouseproper.com)  
[cathouseproper.com](http://cathouseproper.com)



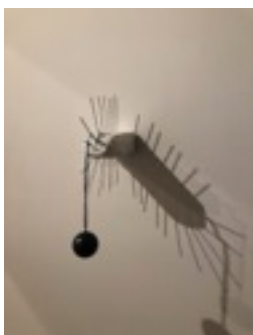
*Bit Player, 2020*  
*rhinestones, bondage tape, leather gimp tongue,*  
*rubber, steel*  
*12'x2'x1'*



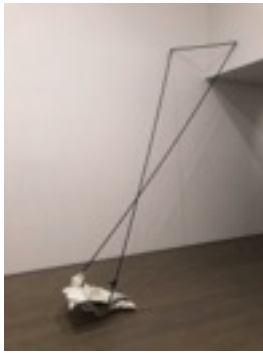
*Squirt, 2020*  
*nails, rhinestones, liquid rubber, stuffing, on panel*  
*18"x8"x7"*



*High Sticking, 2019*  
*wood, foam, rubber, paint*  
*26"x7.5"x18"*



*Balled, 2021*  
*foam, paint, glass sex toy*  
*10"x8"x3"*



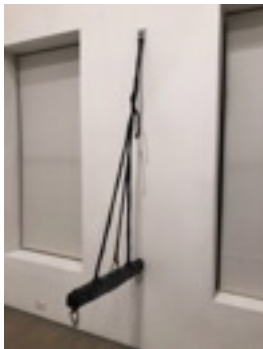
*Bi-Catch, 2020*  
copper, latex, rhinestones, acrylic, spray paint,  
20"x4"x6"x10'



Robert Mapplethorpe  
*Tulips, 1988*  
gelatin silver print  
ed.10, AP 2  
image: 19 1/4 x 19 1/4" paper: 24x20"



*Ledge Play, 2021*  
Rubber wood, rhinestones  
15"x12"x6"



*Hooked, 2020*  
bondage tape, wood, rhinestones, iron, fabric  
96"x8"x42"



*On All Fours, 2020*  
rhinestones, steel, bondage tape, silicone dildo,  
36"x48"x32"