

Carpenter Center

B. INGRID OLSON
HISTORY MOTHER
LITTLE SISTER

July 22–December 23, 2022

Levels 1 and 3

History Mother and *Little Sister*, two simultaneous solo exhibitions by B. Ingrid Olson, feature site-specific installations that explore the reciprocity between photography, sculpture, and architecture, and are informed by the artist's feminist approach to experiences of doubling and mirroring, gendered forms, and the ways that people and their bodies relate to the built environment. Olson's works choreograph sequences of concealing and revealing, manifesting parts of her own body in images and objects that she fractures through cropping, framing, shaping, and distortion. The fractures allow for constant comparison: one image or material up against another, the artist's experience of her body offered to viewers for comparison with their own experiences and bodies. These operations exist as analogs to socio-cultural space and experience, which are distilled and dilated here in instances of abstraction, imaging, making, and display.

HISTORY MOTHER, LEVEL 3

History Mother presents an unconventional "retrospective" of B. Ingrid Olson's practice.

A.
Proto Coda, *Index* (2016–22), a new site-specific installation, displays meticulously

produced MDF reproductions of all sculptural reliefs Olson has made to date, a long-standing element of her practice. Olson employs carving (using a CNC machine on wood or polyurethane foam) and casting to create sculptural reliefs that evoke fragments of the human form in their measurements and symmetries. These reliefs can convey both intimacy and distance, their physicality suggesting contact with both the artist's hand and with machines. The sculptures themselves go through a process of abstraction as details are softened and forms are reduced. (An example of a related work, *If given, closed eyes alive like darkness* [2014]—Olson's first cast relief—is on view in the adjacent gallery.)

With the reinterpretations on view here, Olson creates a further process of abstraction as the specific textures and identities of the original works are flattened by their uniform reproduction in milled and sanded MDF. Each relief makes reference to a part of the body and is hung at a height corresponding to the artist's or installer's body.

B–R.

This presentation includes a selection of photographic works from the past decade alongside new works that show a range of ways Olson uses her body as subject matter. Bent knees, limbs, hands, and feet press against mirrors and photographic surfaces in a methodology of disorientation that confuses points of contact between the figure and the picture plane, between the subject and the artist's constructed spaces and sculptural props. An archival impulse runs through Olson's practice, with collections of objects, images,

for the Visual Arts

and gestures often gathered, repeated, and rhymed across multiple works.

This ongoing series, which features one image embedded within another, employs time as a central subject and structuring device. The double dates on many of the works reference the chronological separation between the creation of each image. This elapsed time, and the attendant sessions of prop-making, space-setting, and body-capturing, become crucial, revelatory elements embedded in the work.

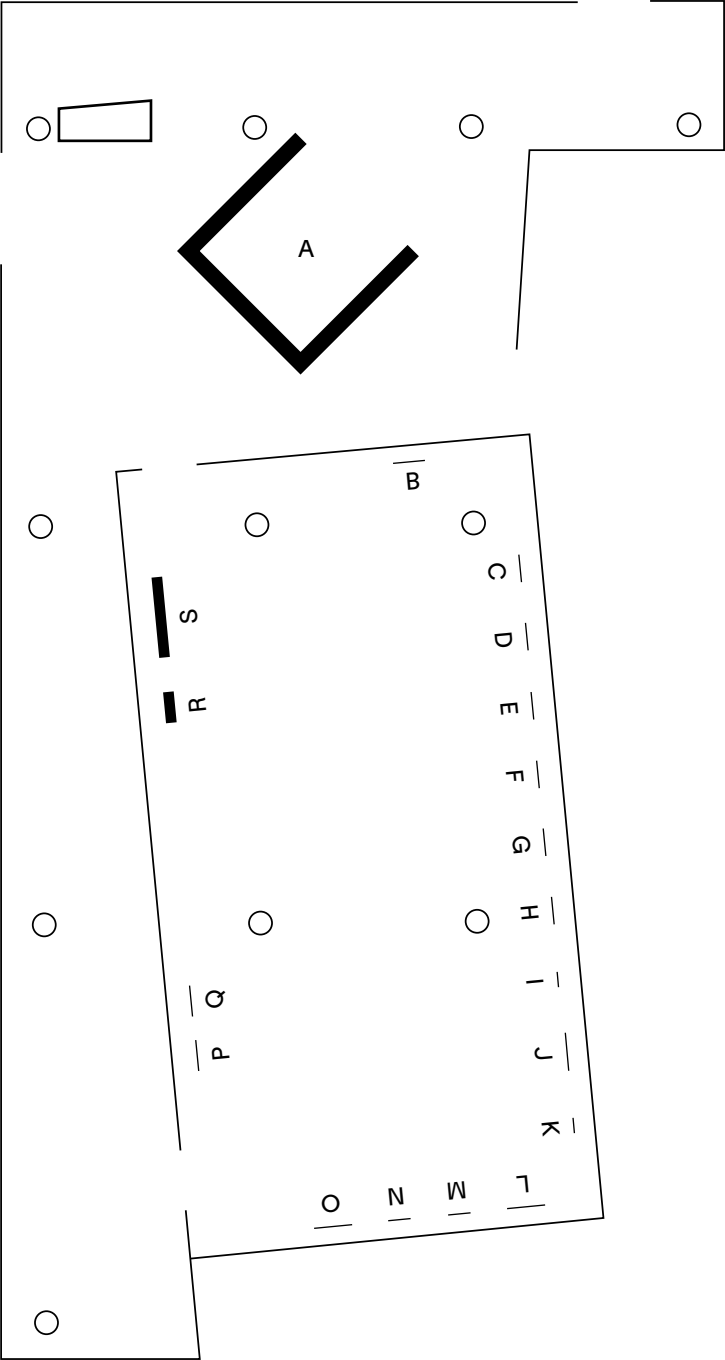
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HISTORY MOTHER

Unless otherwise noted, all works courtesy of the artist and i8 Gallery, Reykjavík.

- A. *Proto Coda, Index*, 2016–22
MDF, Polycrylic, plywood, glue, vinyl, eggshell, aluminum, latex paint
30 parts, dimensions variable
- B. *Of a curve, re, dust on the surface*, 2010–14
Dye-sublimation print on aluminum, inkjet prints, acrylic, transparency, textile over matboard, aluminum, screws, plexiglass frame
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Gift of Lance Renner
- C. *Split Hinge*, 2015–16
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
Collection of Randall S. Kroszner and David L. Nelson
- D. *Present and Daughters*, 2020–21
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
- E. *Untied knots, strings, she, multiple*, 2016–18
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
Collection of Kate Zambreno
- F. *Completed Movement (between about and rub between two notes the number between one and two divided into qualities and kinds)*, 2016–22
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
- G. *Nape, Delay*, 2016–19
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
Collection of Murat Ahmed
- H. *Run-on, fold and split*, 2019–20
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
Collection of Ylinka Barotto and Charles C. Davidson, New York
- I. *Errata (History Mother)*, 2022
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
- J. *Cuirass*, 2020–21
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
- K. *!j!*, 2021–22
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
- L. *Notes for a corner view*, 2017
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
Miller Meigs Collection
- M. *Rifted Grid, per fluid*, 2021–22
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame

HISTORY MOTHER, LEVEL 3



- N. *Equant and Run, with cartilage*, 2017–20
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
Private collection, New York
- O. *Calendar*, 2020–21
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
Collection of the artist
- P. *Shuttle*, 2015–16
Inkjet print and inset UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
Miller Meigs Collection
- Q. *Coming in with your back turned*, 2021–22
Inkjet print and UV-printed matboard in powder-coated aluminum frame
- R. *If given, closed eyes alive like darkness*, 2014
Pigmented resin
Collection of the artist
- S. *Camera (am I disorganized because I lost something I didn't need?)*, 2020–22
Polycarbonate sheet, MDF, screws, stainless steel, acrylic ink, staples, offset prints, gelatin silver prints, inkjet prints, paper, acetate, fabric, latex paint

LITTLE SISTER, LEVEL 1

Little Sister debuts an ambitious suite of new sculptures scaled to the Carpenter Center's spaces, surfaces, and forms, which stand in further critical conversation with the building's affects and ideological origins. Through a variety of mediums, Olson distorts, inverts, and frustrates the

functions and metaphors of architectural elements, such as doors, windows, vestibules, light fixtures, and corridors. Small works suggesting specific anatomies are placed in dialogue with industrial materials and architectural structures.

A.
Why does my vestibule hurt? (2020–22) riffs on the proportions and function of the Carpenter Center's cubic-glass and concrete entrance. The sculpture evokes both doors and walls. This "vestibule" beckons the eye into its corners with small, abject sculptures affixed to a metal structure. Aggressive, seemingly protective protrusions (steel reamers showing the patina of rust and wear from their former use in metalworking) adorn the sculpture. *Why does my vestibule hurt?* is a self-contained exhibition that locates its architecture in the body, a certain soreness or expression of bodily pain synthesized within a system of display.

B.
What I would be if I wasn't what I am (n.d.) appropriates and tweaks the highly evocative 1930s light fixtures (suggesting shells, flowers, architectural ornamentation, modernist restraint, animal anatomy, human genitals) that are installed in the Art Institute of Chicago's Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, where Olson used to work. The artist has replaced all overhead lighting in the Level 1 Gallery and outdoor spaces with sculpturally modified versions of these fixtures.

C.
Camera, Swans, Juliet (2020–22), a sculpture incorporating the empty shells of unfertilized swan eggs, suggests an oblong, telescopic camera. Made specifically to sit upon the space's concrete benches,

this work embodies the push-pull energies and conversations that animate Olson's practice: between protrusion and crevice, masculine and feminine, viewfinder and tool, sculpture and photography, and seeing while being seen.

D, E, F.

Door Picture, a view in perspective arranged close together (2021–22) creates a claustrophobic, corridor-like space that conceals and reveals two photographic works, which image the artist's body engaged in poses of disclosure, withholding, and spatial contortion. White plexiglass "blinders" on either side of *Door Picture*, *Penetration* (2022) nearly conceal its image while encouraging glimpses through the open support structure. By contrast, *Door Picture*, *Strange Ceiling* (2022) turns its back to viewers in the gallery to more fully reveal itself to passersby in the world outside the gallery window.

H.

White Wall, painted for Gray (2022) alludes to a fraught episode between Le Corbusier (architect of the Carpenter Center) and the Irish designer and architect Eileen Gray. The work makes a quiet yet radical intervention into one of the building's iconic architectural features, its primary-colored walls. Gray designed E-1027, the famous villa on the French Riviera, for partner Jean Badovici and herself. After they separated, Le Corbusier, who was obsessed with the house for its "pure and functional architecture,"¹ painted uninvited

colorful murals over the villa's subdued white and gray surfaces. Here, Olson reverses Le Corbusier's aggressive act, painting a subtle palette of white tones over his Carpenter Center wall, a surface that is normally a wide expanse of fire-engine red. Olson's work *Note, Gray (Kiss the architect on the mouth and paint a black stripe laterally across her forehead)* (2018) suggests a hard metal tongue stapled to that same wall.

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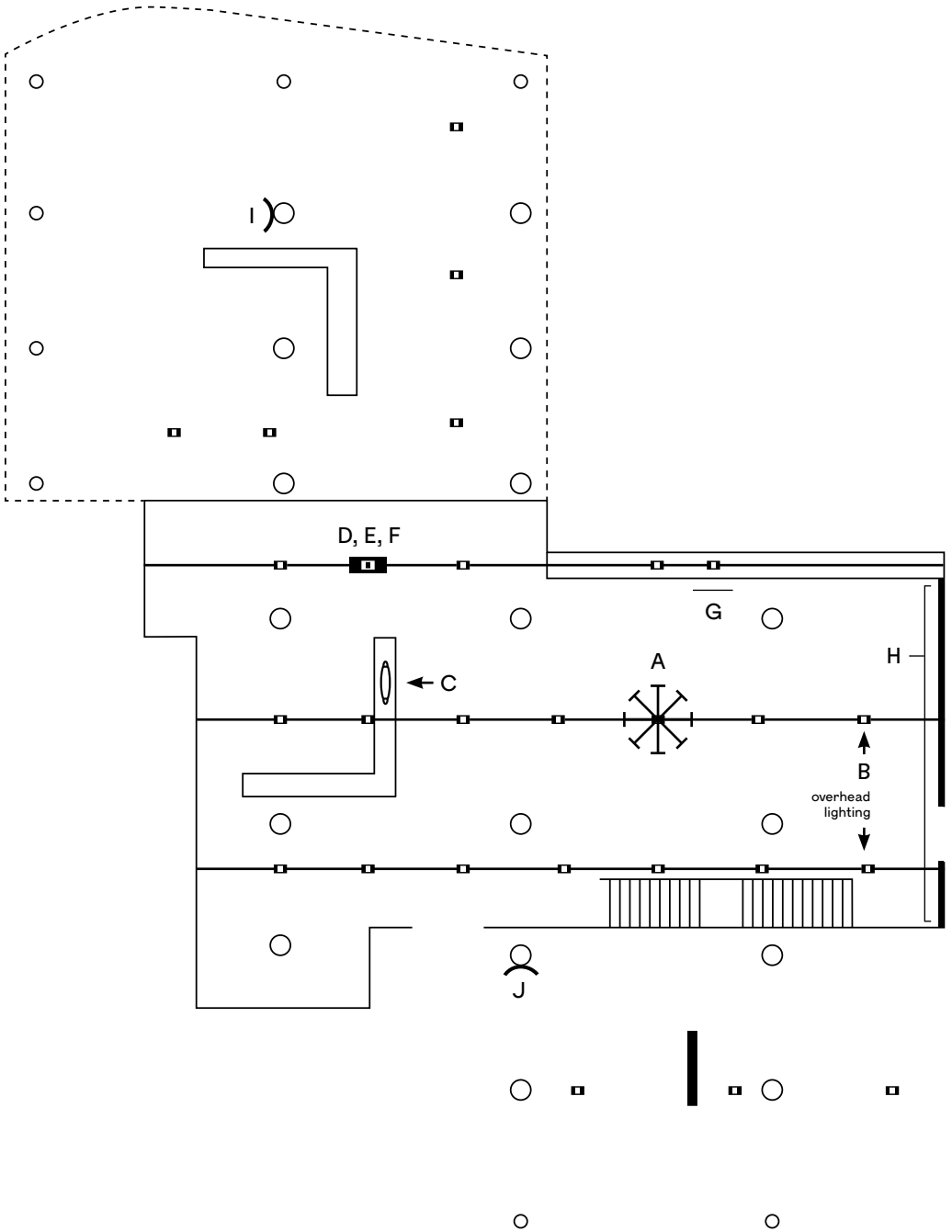
LITTLE SISTER

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- A. *Why does my vestibule hurt?*, 2020–22
Aluminum honeycomb, epoxy, aluminum, screws, Baltic birch plywood; including *Stranger's Surface Parts*, 2022, glazed porcelain, latex, cellophane, wool; *Another's Vestigial*, 2022, glazed porcelain, latex, raw cotton, cellophane; and *Enlargers*, n.d., high-speed steel, stainless steel, rust
- B. *What I would be if I wasn't what I am*, n.d.
Stamped steel, powder coating, light socket and fitting, electrical wiring, light bulbs, galvanized steel conduit
- C. *Camera, Swans, Juliet*, 2020–22
Polyurethane foam, acrylic paint, latex paint, swan eggshells, epoxy, silicone, aluminum
- D. *Door Picture, a view in perspective arranged close together*, 2021–22
Aluminum honeycomb, aluminum, screws

1. Beatriz Colomina, "War on Architecture: E.1027," *Assemblage*, no. 20 (April 1993): 28–29.

LITTLE SISTER, LEVEL 1



- E. *Door Picture, Penetration, 2022*
Plexiglass, dye sublimation print on aluminum, MDF, poplar, silicone, screws
- F. *Door Picture, Strange Ceiling, 2022*
Plexiglass, dye sublimation print on aluminum, MDF, poplar, silicone, screws
- G. *Stranger's Navel (self-portrait with wounded eye), 2021–22*
Cast plastic, ceramic, epoxy, wool, latex, acrylic paint, latex paint, polyurethane foam, screws
Collection of the artist
- H. *White Wall, painted for Gray, 2022*
Latex paint on Le Corbusier wall, with proof of *Note, Gray (Kiss the architect on the mouth and paint a black stripe laterally across her forehead) (2018)*, gelatin silver print, staple
- I. *Reciprocal Fixture, She(II), 2021–22*
Epoxy putty, epoxy resin, fiberglass, epoxy glue, aluminum, latex paint, milk paint
- J. *Common Animal, Natural Instinct, 2021–22*
Epoxy putty, epoxy resin, fiberglass, epoxy glue, aluminum, hair
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PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Artist Talk

- B. Ingrid Olson with curator Dan Byers and catalogue contributor Leah Pires

Thursday, September 29, 2022

6:00–8:30 pm

Theater, Lower Level

Reading

Writer and artist Renee Gladman and poet, translator, and editor Rosmarie Waldrop will share their work. Both Gladman's and Waldrop's writings have had a major influence on Olson's practice. Their work is featured in the exhibition catalogue.

Thursday, November 3, 2022

6:00–8:30 pm

Theater, Lower Level

PUBLICATION

In *History Mother, Little Sister*, Olson's first monograph, the innovative book design brings together extensive documentation of site-specific installations, diagrammatic sketches, and reproductions of works made over the last decade, putting them in conversation with selections of poetry and criticism that have informed Olson's practice. Newly commissioned texts include an introductory essay by curator Dan Byers, an essay by art historian and critic Leah Pires, an experimental text by Renee Gladman, and a conversation between artist Gordon Hall and Olson. Joining these texts are reprinted selections of poetry and essays by Andrew Blackley, Jennifer Bloomer, Anne Boyer, Beatriz Colomina, Maria Fusco, Kim Hyesoon, Diane Lewis, Lily Bea Moor, Michael Snow, Olga Tokarczuk, and Rosmarie Waldrop. The book design is by Chad Kloefer.

Carpenter Center

B. INGRID OLSON

B. Ingrid Olson was born in 1987 in Denver. She lives and works in Chicago. In addition to her Carpenter Center exhibitions, Olson's solo show *Elastic X* opened at Secession, Vienna, in June 2022. Recent solo and two-person exhibitions include *Fingered Eyed*, i8 Gallery, Reykjavík (2019); *Forehead and Brain*, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo (2018); *Kiss the architect on the mouth*, Simone Subal Gallery, New York (2018); and *Klein / Olson*, The Renaissance Society, Chicago (2017). Selected group exhibitions include *Fata Morgana, Jeu de Paume*, Paris (2022); *The Inconstant World*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2021); *Dependent Objects*, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2021); *New Visions: The Triennial for Photography and New Media*, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Høvikodden, Norway (2020); *Personal Private Public*, Hauser & Wirth, New York (2019); *Being: New Photography 2018*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2018); and *Lost Without Your Rhythm*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2018). Olson received a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2010).

B. Ingrid Olson: History Mother, Little Sister is curated by Dan Byers, John R. and Barbara Robinson Family Director. The exhibition and its programs are organized by Jackie Finnegan, Exhibitions Production Assistant; Maria Gonzalez, Gallery and Bookshop Attendant; Kate Kelley, Communications and Administrative Coordinator; Sophie Pratt, Gallery and Bookshop Attendant; Danni Shen, Curatorial and Public Programs Assistant; and Francesca Williams, Exhibitions Manager/Registrar.

The exhibition was installed by Jackie Finnegan, Sophie Pratt, Bella Steele, Paul Swenbeck, José Taymani, and Francesca Williams.

Generous support for Carpenter Center programs is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and Barbara Robinson. Lead support for the publication accompanying *History Mother, Little Sister* is provided by Girlfriend Fund. Additional support from i8 Gallery, Reykjavík, is gratefully acknowledged.



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