

## BORTOLAMI

**Madeline Hollander**

***Heads/Tails***

**10 January – 21 February 2020**

**Opening Friday, 10 January from 6 - 8 pm at 55 Walker**

Bortolami is pleased to announce the opening of *Heads/Tails*, the gallery's first exhibition with Madeline Hollander and its second presentation at 55 Walker.

Primarily known for her work in choreography, performance and dance, Hollander presents *Heads/Tails*, her first major exhibition without human actors. The installation consists of hundreds of used automobile headlights and taillights, covering opposite walls of the gallery, synched with the traffic signal at the nearby intersection of Walker Street and Broadway. As cars driving on Walker Street brake for the red light, the installation's taillights illuminate in incremental and erratic patterns modeled after the behaviors of various types of New York City drivers—lost, rushed, frustrated, texting, tailgating, for example—turning off again when the light changes to green. At sunset the headlights switch to a “brights” setting and at sunrise they will revert to a “fog light” setting, mirroring the street traffic in a nonstop, 24/7 cycle.

Hollander initially set out to choreograph the vehicular traffic outside of the gallery before realizing that Walker Street's traffic patterns were already choreographed: The New York City Department of Transportation programs the city's traffic signals using algorithms that take into account local weather, time of day, statistics from previous years, bus routes, school zones and days, bridges and tunnels, heavy foot traffic, holidays, live collision reports, etc. These programs are updated continuously with live data that controls the flow of movement throughout the city. The world is full of ready-made choreographies whose existence we often take for granted—their signifiers (red, yellow, green) and directives (stop, yield, go), ubiquitous to the point of invisibility, supplying the unconscious programming for our lives, daily routines and movements.

Alongside *Heads/Tails*, Hollander will show a suite of watercolors that function as notations and studies for the installation. For Hollander, who has synesthesia (where sensory or cognitive experience leads to involuntary expression in other sensory or cognitive pathways), color and seemingly abstract forms have the capacity to signify with the specificity of language. Some drawings feature movement sequences and Hollander's choreographic notation, along with detailed drawings of hand gestures, while others illustrate grids of headlights or a constellation of multicolored circles that function as graphemes. Made in preparation for the exhibition, these works suggest a correlation between the city and the body as a corpus, full of arteries, constantly in flux.

A text by Hollander's frequent collaborator, A.E. Benenson, will accompany the exhibition. The text addresses the history of New York City traffic and its regulation of movement vis-a-vis concepts of progress, performance and order. It is presented alongside a small bronze statue of Mercury, one of the 104 that adorned the tops of traffic lights along Fifth Avenue from 1931-1964, and have since largely gone missing. After human traffic controllers using hand signals were replaced by automated light signals, the statues of Mercury with his hand outstretched maintained the notion of a human form directing other bodies, inculcating the figure into this new technological era.

**Madeline Hollander** (b. 1986, Los Angeles) has had solo exhibitions at Artists Institute, New York (2018); Bosse and Baum, London, UK; and SIGNAL, Brooklyn, NY (2016). Her work has been featured in the Whitney Biennial curated by Rujeko Hockley and Jane Panetta (2019), Helsinki Contemporary, Finland (2019), the Work Marathon Festival at the Serpentine Galleries in London (2018), and Centre Pompidou Metz, France (2019). As a choreographer, Hollander has collaborated with Jordan Peele on his feature film *Us* (2019) and Urs Fisher's immersive installation *PLAY* at Gagosian, New York (2019) and Jeffrey Deitch, Los Angeles, CA (2019). She recently choreographed a new ballet, *5 Live Calibrations*, for Los Angeles Dance Project in Los Angeles, that premiered at the Theatre Champs-Élysées, Paris, and the Louvre, Abu Dhabi. She has previously worked as a corps de ballet dancer at the Barcelona Ballet, Spain and Los Angeles Ballet, CA. Upcoming projects include exhibitions and performances at The Shed, New York; The Aldrich Museum, Connecticut; and ARCH Athens, Greece.