

A Maior, Katayoon Yousefbigloo
Jan 11 – Apr 5, 2025

 Western Front
303 E 8th Ave
Vancouver BC V5T 1S1
Canada

Wishing on My Falsies

Western Front is pleased to present *Wishing on My Falsies*, an exhibition of the collective A Maior and the multidisciplinary artist Katayoon Yousefbigloo that explores the mythmaking potential of playing dress-up. Inspired by the superstition of wishing on fallen eyelashes, the exhibition title reinterprets this ritual through a synthetic channel for desire, reflecting A Maior and Yousefbigloo's interest in the aspirations and delusions that drive modes of self-fashioning.

A Maior is a clothing and home goods store managed by artist Bruno Zhu and his family, which doubles as a collective and curatorial platform. For the exhibition, A Maior presents a pair of images from the lookbook series *Fall/Winter* (2023–24). Displayed as billboard-sized wallpapers, the work showcases grandmother Yu Yan performing the role of Model/Icon in an editorial cosmetics campaign, above a photograph of the inside of her fridge. Functioning as faux advertisements, the diptych offers contrasting scales of intimacy between persona and reality, glamour and banality, and the commercial and the domestic. Wrapping parallel walls, *Fall/Winter* engages visual techniques inspired by Renaissance

painting to elongate the gallery, creating a disorienting spatial illusion that further emphasizes A Maior's production of artifice.

Katayoon Yousefbigloo is a founding member of the artist collective Liquidation World and serves as the creative director of P.L.U.R.O.M.A. (Peace, Love, Unity, Respect, Oxygen, Music, Autonomy), an ongoing performance project that takes the form of a fashion label and seasonal DIY runway shows. Leading up to the third season of P.L.U.R.O.M.A., an anonymous person began tagging "sellout \$cum" on the facade of Liquidation World's retail/studio space—critiquing the institutional partnership with the Polygon Gallery to produce the event. In response, Yousefbigloo's new installation *Kiosk* (2025) appropriates this tag as part of her brand and presents a dramatic reimagining of this incident through the perspective of four characters—The Vandal, Security, The Pedestrian, and The Coworker. Video, sound, photocopies, and screenprinted clothing are gathered as fictional evidence displayed on a structure that mimics a mall kiosk. In developing this installation, Yousefbigloo also

shopped Western Front's archive for iconic designs to bootleg. "The Hand of the Spirit" and "FETISH" motifs from the 1970s, along with a signed letter from British avant-garde group Throbbing Gristle, are copied and altered across shirts and accessories, reflecting a lineage of performance practices at Western Front that engage fashion, branding, and persona.

Together, the works spatially and materially toy with the thresholds of authenticity, subverting and spoofing signifiers of glamour, luxury, labour, and class to consider how an identity is styled. In a blend of the imagined and the everyday, the artists appropriate commercial language as a world-building vocabulary, constructing characters that reveal their own fiction.

A live performance by Katayoon Yousefbigloo will take place during the opening reception. In February 2025, Western Front will host the artist Bruno Zhu of *A Maior* for a residency in which he will lead a series of workshops with local writers towards the development of the sequel novella to *Retail Vérité* (2023).

Curated by Kiel Torres.

Biographies

A Maior is a clothing and home goods store located in the outskirts of Viseu, Portugal. Since 2016, an eponymous exhibition program has been hosted within the shopping environment. A Maior is managed by the staff, the artist Bruno Zhu, and his family. A Maior has been featured in exhibitions at Kunstinstituut Melly, Rotterdam; Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem; Kunsthalle Freeport, Porto; X Museum, Beijing; Life Sport and BQ, both Berlin. A Maior was also a writer-in-residence at San Serriffe in Amsterdam, who commissioned their first novella *Retail Vérité* (2023).

Katayoon Yousefbigloo is an Iranian-born interdisciplinary artist and musician based on the traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, Skwxwú7mesh, and sə́lilwətaʔ Nations (Vancouver, Canada). Through video, music, writing, performance, and visual art she examines how media shapes our mythologies. She investigates potential sites of aesthetic, spiritual, and collective transformation found both materially in undefined or forgotten physical spaces, as well as those embedded within the mass media landscape. Yousefbigloo is a founding member of Liquidation World, an art collective that hosts exhibitions, performances, workshops, fashion shows, and other events.

Kiel Torres is a writer, editor, and curator based in Vancouver, Canada. Her work focuses on performance, poetry, correspondence, and criticism. She is assistant curator at Western Front.

MIRRORING TOUCHES IT A PLAY IN TWO PARTS

by Kiel Torres

CAST

Fawn: An ageless woman with a mimosa personality. She perfumes herself with magazine pages and is always a bit windswept.

Demi Whispy: Fawn's curly pet. A fluttery and dramatic creature.

PART 1: DEMI'S BATH

A small apartment bathroom wrapped in black-and-white brocade wallpaper, its intricate pattern dizzying under the flicker of vanity lights surrounding an oval mirror. A mascara-stained wash cloth embroidered with "Paris, je t'aime" in swirly cursive hangs limp on a cast-iron hook shaped like the Eiffel Tower—its chipped blue paint creates a faux patina. A crystal bowl with dried apple flakes, rose hip, and cinnamon bark sits on a toilet tank lid, which is dotted with lipstick kiss decals in a bouquet of pinks.

Fawn, wearing a purple feather trim nightgown, stands at the sink and holds Demi Whispy under the faucet and massages milk cleanser into her fur. She brings it to a lather with a wooden spoolie and sings a lullaby.

Fawn: Inside out, inside out, the world is inside out. Inside out, inside out, love me inside out. Take me away and lock me up, ideology is for fools. It fits me oh so perfectly and keeps me calm and cool. Inside out, inside out, the world is inside out. Inside out, inside out, leave me inside out. Planet turning in a jacket. Total torture off the rack. Mmmmm hmmm.

Fawn gently pats Demi Whispy dry. She sets her on a crescent shaped pillow nestled on her bed between two heaps of clothes—Fawn's drafts. To Fawn, the bed is where she makes her most crucial aesthetic choices, where garments are sifted through, abandoned, and surrendered in the process of getting dressed. Her piles index a series of decisions towards a desired outcome. Some parts make their way into complete sentences, but more often than not they just fold in on themselves, or stay in that musky place between the wash and a second wear.

Fawn: Ooh laa la I love you, my precious mink.

Fawn brushes Demi Whispy with a glass comb. The repetition is extremely relaxing. Her lashes bat ellipses until she begins to dream. Fade to black.

PART 2: THE INTERVIEW

A kitchen with a window that looks out onto the Seine. A crinkled poster of Degas's "Singer with a Glove" hangs from a bulldog clip above a stove where ribbons of steam coil upwards from a wide, heavy pot. Fawn peers inside and sees slick coils of cloth twisting in the rolling water—a dress, with a lettuce trim and abalone buttons. The buttons float to the surface and melt into iridescent pools of oil.

At the windowsill, Demi Whispy stands on her hind legs, but instead of a tail, she's trailed by a long paisley necktie fastened in a Windsor knot. She clutches a pen and notepad between her paws.

Fawn: Um—

Demi Whispy: Stop! Before we begin, ma chérie, pleaaaaase speak into the microphone (gestures to a wooden spoon sitting next to the pot). We're recording!

Fawn picks up the spoon and gently taps the top twice.

Demi Whispy: Let's begin where everything begins, with the image. Tell me about this look! What are you wearing?

Fawn: Okay well, ahem, today I am wearing...it's kind of complicated you see. I think for the record, I'll just say jeans and a white tee. And this nylon thing.

Demi Whispy (*scribbles furiously*): That's not-not accurate. Now, I'm dying to know about your childhood. Tell me, did you ever get lost in the mall?

Fawn (*gazes to the window, now completely fogged up*): Only on purpose. I would run away from my mom just to hear my name called on the intercom.

Demi Whispy: Haha ha ha a a. That's such a tell you were meant to be a star.

Fawn (*chipper*): I'm just in it for all the mail.

Demi Whispy: How does it feel to be the world's most famous epistle?

Fawn: Inky. I do love being on the receiving end of a dear—comma.

Pot sputters. A giant purple feather floats across the window and sticks to the glass.

Demi Whispy: I think it's about time to get real. The listeners are dying to know, what's in your fridge?

Fawn: I push everything to the back to make it look bigger.

Demi Whispy (*snoops and writes a list*): coffee grounds, Brita filter, jade roller, eleven quail eggs.

Demi Whispy: How about your closet?

Fawn (*sighing*): Okay I have to confess, it makes me late. If I ever tell you I'm running behind because of a plumbing emergency, that's a lie. I have outfit paralysis. Thinking about what to wear is like watching a blinking cursor. I hesitate around the first word to begin the thought, which is often weather dependent. But lately, I've been trying to be less practical.

Demi Whispy (*licks pearls of condensation collecting on her fur*): Now, what would you say is the difference between a pendant and an amulet?

Fawn (*pause*): A pendant hangs, and an amulet works. It says you're the chosen one.

Demi Whispy (*sniffs the vapour*): Fashion is a sugar pill after all. It relies on immaterial forces to produce real outcomes.

Fawn drops her microphone in the pot and it shoots silver threads of light through the broth. As she stirs, the dress begins to froth with the evanescence and lightness of a wish. She lifts the dress to find it completely tenderized. All that remains is a skeleton of synthetic floss. Fawn plucks the ribs and they snap back into position.

Fawn: And myth is elastic. It's what holds a high ponytail in place.

END

Notes

The title "Mirroring Touches It" is borrowed from Mei-mei Berssenbrugge's poem "A Placebo," from *Hello, the Roses* (New Direction, 2013).

Fawn's lullaby is from Kate Craig's single-channel video work *Straight Jacket* (1980), with lyrics by Craig, Hank Bull, and Mary Ready.

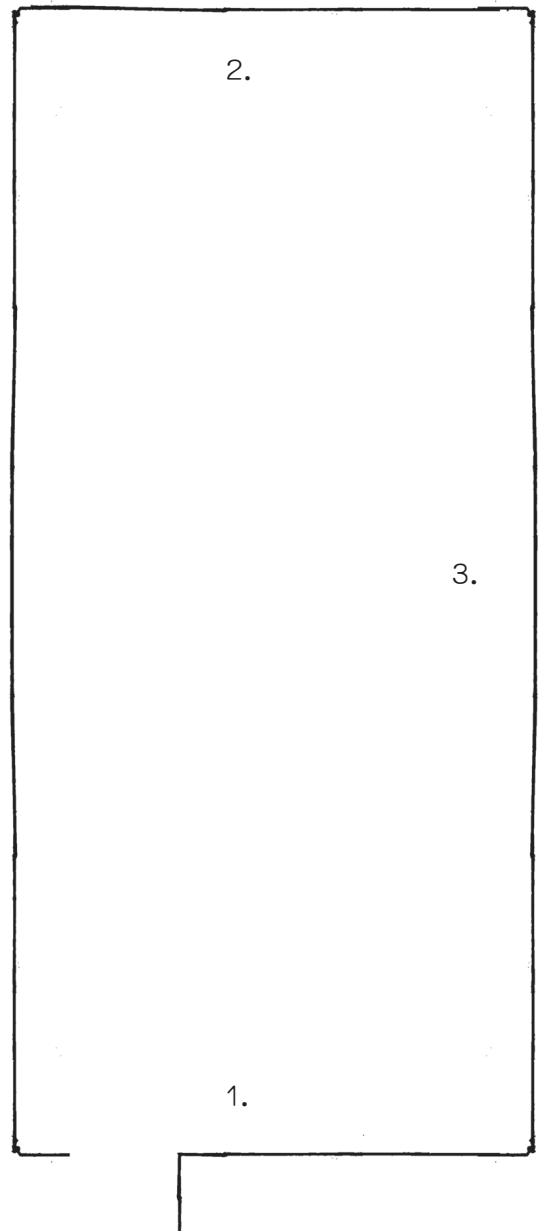
Dreaming of cooking a dress is borrowed from Olga Ravn's novel *The Employees: A workplace novel of the 22nd century* (Lolli Editions, 2018), translated from the Danish by Martin Aitken. Thank you to Claire Geddes Bailey for sending me a picture of this page (106) on Oct 10, 2024.

The difference between a pendant and an amulet was defined by James Albers in November 2020.

All works courtesy of the artists.

1 & 2. A Maior
Fall/Winter (2023-24)
Digital image, vinyl
448 x 420 cm
Model: Yu Yan
Makeup: Jessica Zhu
Photography: Bruno Zhu

3. Katayoon Yousefbigloo
Kiosk (2025)
Video, sound, melamine wood, glass,
LED lights, inkjet prints, screenprinted
garments, security tags, stickers, keys,
scratch cards, slatwall metal accessories
variable dimensions
Performers: Katayoon Yousefbigloo, Gabe Kwok



Project Team

Curator: Kiel Torres
Graphic Design: Line-Gry Hørup
Technicians: Ben Wilson, Dave Hurst,
Fedor Mikhaily, Hannah Rickards, Uno Digital

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