

## Ronny Carny: If I Had a Heart

Curator: Leah Abir

9.7.26 – 3.10.26

Ronny Carny's exhibition is, in effect, a single work: an installation created through a prolonged process of dwelling in the gallery space, unfolding primarily across its walls. Entering the exhibition is like slipping beneath the skin, into the back of the mind, into the depths of the cloud. Lars von Trier's film *Melancholia* opens with a sequence of dreamlike scenes unfolding on earth and in the universe. In one of them, Justine (Kirsten Dunst) raises her hands, lightning rising from her fingers, glowing plasma streaming from their tips. Carny's exhibition, if one surrenders to it, is just such a cosmic, private event.

Developed through sustained engagement with images, materials, and essences, Carny's forms function as a kind of alphabet or DNA—a system of signs capable of containing the world, or creating it. She feverishly searches, gathers, and accumulates forms and gestures with countless variations—holes, hands, spheres, holding, reaching—which become an index of her work. She distills them without losing a single drop. The result is highly abstract, yet also deeply concrete.

One source of inspiration Carny cites for her recent work is what is known as "parts work"—a therapeutic method that views the individual as a collection of exiled parts that can gradually be restored to the care of a mature, benevolent Self. For Carny, the fractured entity is not only personal but also national and political—entities fractured in a way that seems beyond repair. Her search for healing is accompanied by daily news of horror, tragic reports, steadily accumulating and pushing the limbs back outward, to the corners of the room. The mechanisms of emotion and compassion wear thin; the sense of orientation and grounding loses its hold.

Carny's exiled signs-letters-limbs inhabit a deep space, perpetually on the threshold of form or life. "Lone satellites," the artist calls them, floating in space: "a cytokine storm (an amplified immune response), or a neutral, directionless drift through space, without joints and without gravity." The forms cling to the wall, attempting to fuse with it, to give it texture, direction, and movement. They remember their earlier drift through digital spaces, the liquid, shifting, stretching state of matter. Charged with energy, they magnetize toward the wall and toward one another. The bowling ball, like the boomerang, is held, thrown, and comes back—a circularity that carries some comfort.