

3, 4½, 7½, 12
January 5 – February 2, 2020
(Exhibition Opening January 5 12-5pm)



Royale Projects is pleased to announce *3, 4½, 7½, 12*, an exhibition of new works by Jen Aitken opening Jan 5 and running through Feb 2. This will be the artist's first solo show in Los Angeles, CA.

Resembling fragments of buildings, Aitken's cast concrete sculptures explore the body's relationship to the structural world while offering a quiet moment of contemplation. As one moves around each work, the spatial and volumetric qualities seem to shift, encouraging a slow, focused perception and guiding visual awareness. The artist reconsiders the environments encountered everyday by blurring the boundary between art and engineering and selecting what is revered or neglected in our surrounding spaces.

She states "my core drive as an artist is to encourage intuitive intelligence. I aim to subvert language and interpretation in order to emphasize direct experience."

Much like the innovators of minimalism- Carl Andre, Donald Judd- Aitken continuously searches for new compositional possibilities by combining a fixed set of flat geometric shapes into complex forms. Her most recent body of work presented in *3, 4½, 7½, 12*

eliminates the curvilinear lines that were explored in her previous series instead creating dynamic structures strictly by rotating networks of rectangles in increments of 45 and 90 degrees. Through a regimented framework, this process yields a quirky specificity that verges on anthropomorphism.

Surfaces allude to the absent materials -plywood, plastic molds- that were used to forge each segment. Certain sides appear to be visually floating although they are intrinsic to the sculpture's dense mass. Embedded ceramic pieces emerge from a muted color palette offering a curious companion to the cement and steel.

During Aitken's time in California for residencies at Eastside International (ESXLA) in Los Angeles and Andrea Zittel's A-Z West in Joshua Tree, she began to incorporate steel joinery and bolts inspired by anchor plates used for structural reinforcement in the earthquake prone area. Giving way to cantilevering, this expanded the range of possible configurations. The steel components of the wall mounted works act as both a fastening device to mount the concrete forms and as a hollow counterpart to the solid volume of the casts.

Toronto based, Aitken received her MFA in 2014 from the University of Guelph in Ontario, and her BFA in 2010 from Emily Carr University in Vancouver. She was the 2017 recipient of the Hnatyshyn Foundation and TD Bank Emerging Visual Artist Award and has received grants from the Toronto Arts Council, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Canada Council for the Arts. Recent solo and two-person exhibitions include Georgia Scherman Projects, Toronto, Canada; Towards Gallery, Toronto, Canada; YYZ Artists' Outlet, Toronto, Canada; Battat Contemporary, Montreal; and Centre Clark, Montreal, Canada.

Jen Aitken gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council for the Arts.