



Jesse Harrod, Bugdies, 2025, Extruded plastic, 22½ x 18½ in (57.2 x 47 cm), HARR 106

## Jesse Harrod: Pet Trade

February 5 – March 28, 2026

Opening reception, February 5, 6-8pm

In *Pet Trade*, Jesse Harrod presents a range of new works exploring the affect and erotics of companionship, care, and queer materiality. This exhibition includes a selection of small-scale felt collages, drawings produced with 3D plastic-printing pens, a series of macraméd heart-shielding amulets, and a flock of sculptural plush parrots displayed in handmade cages. *Pet Trade* features an unpredictable constellation of works that exemplify Harrod's subversive sense of humor and playfully promiscuous art practice. Across these works, Harrod labors at the intersection of fantasy and domesticity, searching for liberation within the technicolor-handmade.

Featuring Harrod's signature, neon-psychedelic color palette, a new suite of 3D-pen drawings depict dreamlike, semi-autobiographical scenes of navigating boredom and illness at home. The pens, a new and experimental medium for Harrod, extrude melted plastic filament through a nozzle tip. The erratic, wiggly-wobbly quality of the 3D-printed pen lines impart both a sense of hilarity and fragility, with forms teetering on the brink of breakdown. Having spent much of their life navigating chronic illness and the labyrinths of medical care, Harrod renders their experiences not as traumatic, but as ecstatic, or insistently alive. These drawings are complimented by a more geometric and abstract selection of felt collages that similarly buzz with fuzzy finishes and blurred borderlines.

Exhibited within ovalesque wood frames, several macramé amulets appear as the centerpieces of some strange new shield or personal seal Harrod has made for themself. Soft, serpentine, and seductive, the amulets nevertheless represent personal protection as symbolically charged objects meant to armor the heart, the most vulnerable and overworked of all bodily organs. Yonic and biomorphic, the amulets confront viewers like a multi-dimensional Rorschach test, sussing out our desires, repulsions, biases, and behaviors. Taken together, the amulets inspire a sense of queer kinship: part shield, part spell, part reminder that survival is a collaborative project.

Suspended from the ceiling are a group of highly decorated plush parrots perched within paper-mache-coated wire cages. Constant companions, unreliable narrators, witnesses, and co-conspirators, the flamboyant, awkward, out-sized parrots hover and gossip above the exhibition. A simultaneous homage and

parody of queer family, and a clever nod to Donna Haraway's theory of "significant-otherness" (the deeply intertwined relationships between humans and other species), the parrots appear like a group of proud guardians protecting Harrod's bounty or naughty deviants ready to disrupt the whole scene.

*Pet Trade* is a lush and unruly invitation into the vibrant interior and exterior worlds that Harrod has built over decades of living with, against, and beyond their own body, as well as with, against, and beyond the bodies of others. Replete with humor, affection, defiance, and care, Harrod refuses despair and insists instead on queer possibility.

- Danny Orendorff

Jesse Harrod has had solo exhibitions at Bowtie Projects, Los Angeles, CA; Drake Hotel, Toronto, Canada; Socrates Sculpture Park, Queens, New York; Hangaram Art Museum, Seoul, South Korea; NurtureArt, Brooklyn, NY; Vox Populi, Philadelphia, PA; and Fleisher/Ollman, among others. Harrod has been featured in group exhibitions at venues such as SPACE, Portland, ME; Detroit Artist Market and Elaine L. Jacob Gallery, Detroit, MI; SculptureCenter, NY; Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art, New York, NY; the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI; and Antenna Gallery, New Orleans, LA. In 2021, Harrod was commissioned by the John Michael Kohler Arts Center to create a work responding to the Eugene Von Bruenchenhein collection in the center's Art Preserve. In 2020, they received a Pew Fellowship in the Arts as well as a Temple University Faculty Award for Creative Achievement. Harrod has been awarded residencies at Captiva Island, Florida, through the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation; the John Michael Kohler Arts Center's Art/Industry program; Fire Island Artist Residency; Haystack Mountain School of Craft; the Icelandic Textile Center; the Vermont Studio Center; Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity; and Museum of Art and Design, among others. They are currently the Head of Fibers & Material Studies at Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia.