

For immediate release

Gallery One & Gallery Two

How We Work: Smack Mellon at 30

September 19–November 22, 2026

On the occasion of the organization's 30th Anniversary, Smack Mellon presents a group exhibition reflecting on our work over the past three decades. Gathering new and old works by program alumni, former/current employees, artists who are new to the program and exemplary of our mission, alongside archival material, the exhibition explores the idea of “work” as a foundational throughline of Smack Mellon's operations. Founded in 1995 by artist Andrea Reynosa and musician Kevin Vertrees, Smack Mellon has consistently held artistic development, production, and experimentation as primary. As such, this exhibition grew from an introspective gaze, asking: what does it mean to make and maintain space for artists to create their work?

What we bring together is an examination of various permutations of labor through their material traces: bodily, robotic, artistic, domestic, transactional, and political. These forms of labor extend from the artworks on view through the ethos of the organization to uncover the often invisible labor of making, world-building, and community-building, requiring time spent and dedication delivered. As such, this exhibition focuses on the specificity of Smack Mellon's particular style of support for artists making their work—hands-on and always evolving. In and of itself, this operative modality has required immense dedication through the combined efforts of artists, staff, board members, volunteers, supporters, and audiences, many of whom are also artists.

Smack Mellon is the labor of a thriving ecosystem. It is the blood, sweat, and tears of those who actively and consistently put artists first, because they (we) believe that creating art is necessary to feel alive, to move forward, to respond to the world at large, and to imagine what lies beyond the status quo. As an exhibition, this is a thoroughly unscientific core sample of Smack Mellon's activities, but acts as a synecdoche in an attempt to encompass the past and map a trajectory into the future. Through this exhibition we recommit to our ethos, now thirty years strong.

The exhibition features artists: The Barnstormers, Itziar Barrio, Sonya Blesofsky, Patty Chang, Camel Collective (Anthony Graves and Carla Herrera-Prats), Melissa Dubbin & Aaron S. Davidson, Kyoung Eun Kang, Moko Fukuyama, Javier Maria, Ash Moniz, Pat Oleszko, Sreshta Rit Premnath, Lucia Reissig, Ward Shelley, and Asia Stewart. In addition to the works on view, Smack Mellon will present a series of public programs throughout the run of the exhibition, including performances by exhibiting artists Kyoung Eun Kang and Asia Stewart, among others to be announced in the coming weeks.

How We Work: Smack Mellon at 30 is curated by Rachel Vera Steinberg, Curator & Director of Exhibitions, with the assistance of Curatorial Intern Elle Gallen.

Artist Bios

The Barnstormers were a collective of New York artists who created large-scale collaborative paintings, films and performances. The group formed in 1999 after a pilgrimage to the rural town of Cameron, North Carolina. During the trip, twenty-five artists painted dozens of barns, tractor-trailers, and shacks. Consequently, the tiny tobacco farming community became the unlikely Mecca for the urban collective. The Barnstormers interpreted and communicated the visual, cultural, and spiritual awakenings inspired by their trips to the south.

In New York, the Barnstormers expanded beyond the initial scope of the barn-painting project. As part of the well-attended 2000 Downtown Arts Festival, the collective presented 'Watching Paint Dry.' This short time-lapse film captured a constantly changing painting that was created by twelve different artists over two weeks in July. In December of 2000 they presented a massive collaborative installation and performance at the Fish Tank Gallery in Williamsburg. In 2001, they presented the solo exhibition *No Condition is Permanent* at Smack Mellon. Internationally, The Barnstormers continued to experiment by painting live with DJs and bands in New York, Osaka, and Cuba until the group dissolved.

Itziar Barrio is an interdisciplinary artist producing long-term research-based projects that involve different agents and collaborators. By rewriting the dominant narratives through which our societies, identities, and realities are constructed, her work opens up new futures. Barrio has recently been awarded a 2024 Guggenheim Fellowship and a 2024 NYFA/NYSCA Artist Fellowship, and she is currently working on her upcoming solo exhibition at Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. Her survey exhi-

bition was curated by Johanna Burton in 2018, and her monograph was published by SKIRA in 2023. Barrio's work has been presented internationally at CAFA Art Museum, Beijing, the 14th Shanghai Biennale, Salt Istanbul, ONX Onassis Foundation, e-flux, Smack Mellon, PARTICIPANT INC, MACRO, MACBA, Museo del Banco de la República, Belgrade's Contemporary Art Museum, and Havana Biennial. She has received awards from Brooklyn Arts Council, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, New York Foundation for the Arts and Ministry of Culture of Spain. Barrio is a New Museum's NEW INC alumni and she was a recipient of the Spanish Academy in Rome Fellowship (2018-19). She has participated in residencies including Skowhegan and ISCP. Barrio's work has been written about in Artforum, Art in America, The New York Times, The Brooklyn Rail, ART PAPERS and BOMB. She has been a seminar leader at Whitney's ISP Program (2023/2024 & 2024/2025) and has lectured internationally most recently at New Museum, Harvard, Hunter College and the New School. She teaches at the School of Visual Arts and Sarah Lawrence College in NY. She is a critic at NYU Steinhardt and Rhode Island School of Design, RISD (2025 – 2026).

Sonya Blesofsky is a Brooklyn-based installation artist whose work is inspired by the built environment and explores personal and collective memory. Her site-responsive work employs architectural interventions, cast sculptures, hand-built plaster forms and constructions made from found architectural objects. Blesofsky's sculptural works look at how we remember places, and how that remembering shapes us. She currently uses historic plasterworking and traditional trade techniques to embody the process of remembering, and to act as both advocate and critic of historic ornament and its relationship to power.

Blesofsky received her MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and BA from UC Santa Cruz. She has received numerous residencies and fellowships, including MacDowell, Urban Glass, Lower East Side Printshop, Museum of Arts and Design, RAIR Philly, CUE Art Foundation, Smack Mellon, Dieu Donne, Iaspis Stockholm and a NYSCA/NYFA Fellowship. Blesofsky's work has been shown in New York at Spencer Brownstone, Mixed Greens, Wave Hill, Present Co and Cuchifritos, as well as in Miami, San Francisco, Kansas City, and internationally in Denmark, Sweden and Finland. Blesofsky's work has been reviewed in The Village Voice, Art Forum, New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, AFCity, Hand Papermaking Magazine and The Brooklyn Rail. Blesofsky lives and works in Brooklyn.

Patty Chang is an acclaimed contemporary artist working in performance, video, text, photography and sculpture. Her recent work attempts to find ways to connect

with ecologies and systems larger than the self. Chang's recent projects include *The Wandering Lake*, a multi-year project considering human-engineered water and human life, *Learning Endings*, a collaborative project with feminist environmental scholar Astrida Neimanis and wildlife pathologist Aleksija Neimanis on porpoise necropsy and the emotional labor of science, and *Abyssal*, a project on porcelain, Chinese immigrant labor, and the oceans. Her recent video installation *Stray Dog Hydrophobia* (in collaboration with David Kelley), was staged live at LACMA amid four surrounding projections and performed by a chorus of vocalists, percussionists, and horn players, immersing audiences in an oceanic world shaped by the intertwined histories of deep-sea mining, colonialism, slavery, and geoengineering.

CAMEL COLLECTIVE consists of Anthony Graves (b. 1975, South Bend, IN) and Carla Herrera-Prats (b. 1973–d. 2019, Mexico City). Their works spanning video, photography, sculpture, and performance, are informed by research on collaborative production, marginal histories, and the impacts of technology on human affect. Camel has had solo exhibitions at Ulterior Gallery (NYC), Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo (Mexico City), REDCAT Gallery (LA), Casa del Lago, (Mexico City), and SixtyEight Art Institute (Copenhagen), among other institutions. Their works have been featured at The Queens International 2018: Volumes (NYC), Trienal de Artes Frestas, Sesc, Sorocaba, (Brazil), Trienal Poli/Gráfica de San Juan (Puerto Rico), Mass MoCA, (North Adams, MA), and the Hessel Museum at Bard College (Annendale-on-Hudson, NY). The duo has been the recipient of numerous awards and residencies. Graves continues to work as Camel Collective and is represented by Ulterior Gallery in New York.

Melissa Dubbin & Aaron S. Davidson are artists based in Brooklyn, New York. Together they have co-authored works across a variety of mediums. Dubbin and Davidson apply collaborative processes in their practice and engagement with materials. Their works are characterized by transformations of the biological and mechanical; gemstones record, metals have memory, sounds are given shape and fluids hydrate machines. Their recent projects explore relations between the environment, technology and artificial life forms.

Their work was recently featured in the Biennale Son, Sion, Switzerland (2025), rīvus, the 23rd Biennale of Sydney, Australia (2022), BioMedia, The Age of Media with Life-like Behavior at ZKM Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe, Germany (2021-22) and IF THE SNAKE, Okayama Art Summit, Okayama, Japan (2019). In 2020/21 they were artists-in-residence at EPFL Pavilions, Lausanne, Switzerland. In 2022 Dubbin and Davidson were each awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in the Creative

Arts from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. Their work is held in several private and public collections including recent acquisitions by the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

Aaron S. Davidson received an MFA from the Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts, Bard College and a BA from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. Davidson teaches at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York.

Melissa Dubbin is a graduate of the Masters Program of Experimentation in Art and Politics (SPEAP) SciencesPo, Paris and received a BA from the College of Santa Fe. Dubbin teaches at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY.

Moko Fukuyama is a multidisciplinary artist working across sculpture, installation, experimental film, and collaborative projects. She has exhibited and collaborated with institutions including The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, The Kitchen, Socrates Sculpture Park, Lighthouse Works, The Shed, Recess, deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, and Public Art Fund. She is a Guggenheim and NYFA/NA-SCA Fellow, and has completed residencies at MacDowell, Yaddo, and Art Omi. She is also an International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP) honoree.

Originally from Japan and now based in Brooklyn, Fukuyama has lived in various cities across the United States, where she closely observed how urban societies interact with nature. Her work addresses the environmental and cultural challenges shaping both American society and her personal experiences. Drawing from her interest in recreational sports fishing, Fukuyama incorporates the concept of “lures” into her sculptures, using them as metaphors for human manipulation of the natural world. Her work, often made from salvaged wood and painted with vibrant automotive finishes, explores the dynamics of attraction among diverse forms of life. Fukuyama’s sculptures reflect themes of overconsumption, consumerism, sustainability, and urbanization, as well as the tension between human desires and environmental impact.

Kyoung eun Kang is an interdisciplinary artist born in South Korea and based in New York. Her practice spans a diverse range of media, including performance, video, painting, photography, and installation. Her work has been exhibited internationally and across the United States at venues like A.I.R. Gallery, Collar Works, NURTUREart, and BRIC Project Room in New York, as well as the Korean Cultural Center in Washington, D.C., and the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Korea. She has performed at the Queens Museum, Socrates Sculpture

Park, and The Momentary in Bentonville, Arkansas. She has received residencies and fellowships from the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, MacDowell, Smack Mellon, the International Studio & Curatorial Program, the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, and the New York Foundation for the Arts, among others. She holds a BFA and MFA in painting from Hongik University in Seoul and an MFA from Parsons School of Design in New York.

Javier María is a Dominican artist, designer, and audiovisual technician based in New York. Built on more than a decade of installing, maintaining, and troubleshooting exhibition systems, his practice examines how technical standards, bureaucratic procedures, and infrastructures shape public life. Working across video, photography, installation, text, and administrative media, he investigates the material systems that organize visibility, circulation, and access. His work centers on labor—not only the repetitive routines of institutions, but also the invisible work of maintenance, calibration, repair, and operation that allows systems of optimization to appear frictionless and neutral.

María holds a degree in Graphic and Digital Design from the Altos de Chavón School of Design. His work has been exhibited at the Centro León Biennial, The Wrong Biennial, The Image Centre, the Altos de Chavón Gallery, Casa Quien, and NoMAA Gallery in New York.

Ash Moniz is a transdisciplinary artist working across video, sculpture, performance, and installation. Currently based between New York and Cairo, they have spent most of their life in the SWANA region, as well as in China and Canada. Over the past ten years, Moniz has developed a research-based practice interrogating the violence embedded in supply-chain logistics. This work has centered on how the same visualizations or disruptions that are used by systems of power to control and manage labor can also be reclaimed by workers as tools for resistance, leverage, and solidarity. This tension—between regulation and resistance, between the systems that track lost time and the workers who reclaim it—marks the crack where something else can begin. Engaging the politics of absence, Moniz's work shows how what is missing or unspeakable can give shape to new forms of resistance and connection.

Pat Oleszko, known as the Ms Tricks of Dis Guise, has a large body-of work. Utilizing elaborate costumes and props, she creates performances, films, installations, inflatables and spatial events with much puntification and uttered shenanigans. She has worked from the popular art forms of the street, party, parade, and burlesque

house, to the forests, fields, mountains, and waters. Oleszko has presented at the Museum of Modern Art, Documenta, the Lake Placid Winter Olympics, and Lincoln Center, and shown in *Esquire*, *Ms*, *Playboy*, *Sesame Street Magazine*, and *Artforum*. For her diverse efforts she has been awarded the Rome Prize, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a DAAD (Berlin), 5 NEA's, 6 New York Foundation of the Arts Fellowships, several Tony nominations, a Jim Henson Grant, and a Bessie (the New York Dance & Theater Award for Sustained Excellence) all while doing intermittent battle with the Authorities at Large. Most recently, her survey show, *Fool Disclosure* was at Sculpture Center, Queens, and she exhibited in the 2026 Whitney Biennial where she received the prestigious Bucksbaum Award. From the personal to the political, the work is an exorcise thru absurdity and humor. The truth squirts.

Sreshta Rit Premnath is an artist from Bangalore living in Brooklyn and Williamstown, where is an Associate Professor of Art at Williams College. He has had solo exhibitions at venues including MIT List Visual Arts Center, Contemporary Art Center Cincinnati, Institute of Contemporary Art San Diego, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, Contemporary Art Gallery Vancouver, and Nomad Foundation in Rome. He is the founding editor of Shifter, a platform that convened public discussions and produced topical publications from 2004-2021.

Lucía Reissig is an Argentinian/Guatemalan artist based in New York City. Her work explores the memory of the body and objects through care, domestic labor, informal economies, and food politics. Working primarily in sculpture, her practice also engages in collaborative projects that weave together feminist archival publishing, queer food politics, and community-based pedagogy. Reissig's artistic training began in artist-run spaces before participating in the Programa de Artistas at Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Buenos Aires (2017-18) and Escuela Incierta at Lugar a Dudas, Cali (2018). She received her MFA in Sculpture from Bard College in 2024.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Glossary* (2025, mimo, NYC) and *287.5 kilos* (2023, Móvil, Buenos Aires). Her work has been exhibited internationally at MALBA, BIENALSUR, Museo Casa Nacional del Bicentenario, Centro Cultural Recoleta, MUNTREF, and Indigo+Madder Gallery in London. In 2021 she published *Pisos pegajosos* with HambreHambreHambre. Her awards include the Premio en Obra at arteBA (2019) and the inaugural Grant for Sculpture from the Jonathan and Barbara Silver Foundation (2026). She has participated in residencies at Mass MoCA Studios and Millay Arts (2025). Her work has been featured in Sculpture Magazine, Impulse Magazine, Artishock Revista, and Maleva Mag among others.

Ward Shelley is an artist associated with the Brooklyn scene. He works with large installation projects that freely mix architecture and performance, sprawling text-oriented installations, as well as informational diagrams and timelines on culture-related subjects.

Shelley has exhibited in more than 10 countries. Major projects in New York include the *Mir 2 Project* at Smack Mellon and the *Voyage Platform* at Socrates Sculpture Park. In 2004 he lived and worked inside the walls of Pierogi Gallery for 5 weeks for “*We Have Mice*.” Ward Shelley enjoys working on collaborative projects. In 2007 he organized a group to realize the *Flatland* project at the SculptureCenter, an investigation into the effects of architecture on social relationships. He continues to work with Alex Schweder on projects such as living on a 20 foot wheel often referred to as the “artist hamster wheel,” and a 7-day/24-hour outdoor performance in the Wall Street district called *The NewComers* sponsored by Performa. Along with Douglas Paulson he recently completed *The Last Library IV* for ArtBasel Miami and the St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts.

Shelley's work is in a number of museum collections including the Museum of Modern Art, The Whitney Museum, the Brooklyn Museum, and The Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art. His diagrams have been included in anthologies on art with text and information graphics. Shelley received a Painting and Sculpture award from the Joan Mitchell Foundation, and has been a fellow of the American Academy in Rome since 2006. He has received NYFA and NEA fellowships in sculpture and new media categories, a Bessie Award for installation art, and grants from the Jerome Foundation and the Pollock-Krasner Foundation. He is represented by Pierogi Gallery in Brooklyn and does projects with Freight+Volume in Tribeca.

Asia Stewart is a visual artist who uses performance as a pathway to image-making. Her performances, often durational works of endurance, unfold as social experiments that negotiate terms of agency and power with audiences. Introducing levels of risk into the performer-audience relationship, Stewart both demands and elicits audience members' attention, engagement, and unease. Her performances almost always involve unpredictable exchanges, whether they are physical, material, monetary, energetic, or intangible. Stewart's performances have been supported by organizations that include The Shed, The Flea, Franklin Furnace, A.I.R. Gallery, Silver Art Projects, Marc Straus Gallery, Marble House Project, GALLIM, The Watermill Center, and the Brooklyn Arts Council. In the wake of her performances, Stewart creates autonomous works (photographs, prints, sculptures, and installations) that carry the essence of the original, live acts that preceded them. Her

photographs, films, and object-based artworks have been exhibited at institutions across the United States and internationally at venues that include The Bronx Museum, A.I.R. Gallery, SAC Bucharest, Kellen Gallery, Mercury Store, Untitled Space, NARS Foundation, Goodyear Arts, and Anthology Film Archives. Her first series of prints is held in the permanent collection of the Mint Museum in Charlotte, NC.

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