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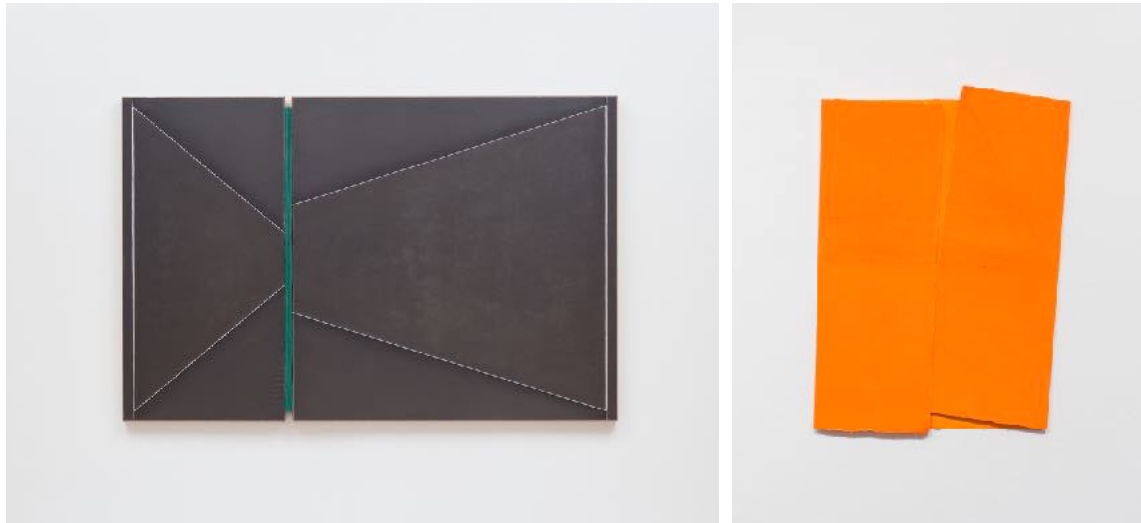
**For Immediate Release**

## **New York-based artist N. Dash presents new works in solo exhibition at Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara (MCASB)**

**Exhibition Title:** N. Dash

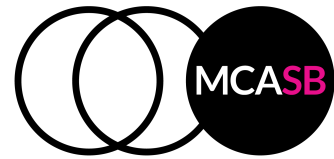
**Opening Reception:** Friday, November 22, 2019, 6 - 8 pm at MCASB

**Exhibition on View:** November 22, 2019 – February 16, 2020



**Left:** N. Dash, *Untitled*, 2019, Adobe, graphite, acrylic, linen, jute, 48 x 72 in (121.92 x 182.88 cm), Courtesy the Artist and Casey Kaplan, New York, Photo: Jason Wyche. **Right:** N. Dash, *Commuter (4)*, 2019, Acrylic, paper, 12 x 16 in (30.48 x 40.65 cm), Photo: Alex Blair.

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA. Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara (MCASB) is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of New York-based artist N. Dash. The exhibition will present new works shown for the first time, including pieces from the artist's ongoing *Commuter* series, presented together with recent large scale paintings. This exhibition marks the first time that the *Commuter* series is highlighted in an institutional venue. "The *Commuter* series is an important body of work within Dash's artistic practice," states Abaseh Mirvali, Executive Director & Chief Curator at MCASB. "And I dare to say, that in many ways, it is a synthesis of Dash's artistic methodology."



Mirvali closes one year of exhibition programming at MCASB, having presented the work of diverse internationally renowned artists, whose practices range from installation, to film and photography, to ceramics, music, and performance. “It is only fitting that with this year-end exhibition we honor painting and its many manifestations,” says Mirvali. “Dash’s works reinterpret and explore the media of drawing and painting with subtle, yet powerful gestures, and we are thrilled to present her work to the greater Southern California community.”

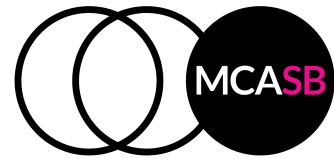
The paintings, photographs, and drawings of N. Dash convey a profound tactile sensitivity through the artist’s manipulation of materials such as fabric, adobe, jute, polystyrene, paper, and string. Utilizing this variety of media with minute attention to detail, Dash constructs works that engage with visible and invisible forms of energy and movement: of bodily meridians, architectural circulation, and environmental flux. Transmuting rough materials into finished pieces with a sculptural sensibility, Dash’s work evokes the materially embodied yet intangible presence of attentive touch.

One of the central components in the body of work is the “fabric sculptures,” small forms made by continually rubbing pieces of white cotton fabric between the fingers until they deteriorate into tangles of thread. Imbued with a patina of oil and dirt, and with the labor of continual movement—unseen but still discernible within the fibers—the small sculptures embody a preverbal, visceral, and intuitive system of communication. Distressed and abject, the forms are distilled through archival documentation and subsequently preserved and re-presented as silkscreened images incorporated into paintings.

The ongoing *Commuter* (2010-) series arises out of the artist’s work with the fabric sculptures and the related practice of engaging with the potentiality of materials through recurrent manual manipulation. While riding on the subway, walking, and during other daily travels, Dash creates quasi-sculptural works by touching, folding, and unfolding blank pages of paper. This performative movement produces creases and other indices of touch on the increasingly worn sheets. After weeks of repetitive movement, a coating of ink or graphite powder is applied to the surfaces, sealing the resulting patina on the paper. This final step highlights their layered, sculptural qualities and captures the otherwise ephemeral process of construction embedded within the paper. Accepting the element of chance within a highly controlled set of procedures, the series engages with the nature of how materials and time coexist and collide.

Dash’s interest in the body’s capacity to communicate through touch extends to investigations into other materials and structures. The paintings often feature troweled-on fields of adobe, collected from the high desert and shipped to the artist’s studio, which develops grooves and ridges as it dries. Serial lengths of string are frequently embedded into the adobe and then partially removed, leaving thin conduits. In larger-scale paintings, single or multiple panels are sometimes shrouded in lengths of cloth taken directly from the bolt, with selvages left visible. This exhibition includes work that for the first time incorporates agricultural netting, with its trademark safety-orange hue. Used to shield plants from the vagaries of insects, rain, snow, or wind, the netting acts as a protective sheath, just as adobe insulates traditional architectural structures from the elements. Another multi-panel work in the show at MCASB includes a central sculptural section composed of an additional component new to Dash’s body of work: cardboard edge protectors, a common packing material that safeguards the corners of quadrilateral objects in transit.

“The choice to use natural and manmade materials to create pieces that communicate from an abstract language may open a portal that enables us to experience the immaterial structures of time, the infinite cycles of nature, and as it happens, to feel what connects us all to these phenomena, and to life,” Mirvali concluded.



N. Dash at Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara (MCASB) is curated by Abaseh Mirvali, Executive Director and Chief Curator, and is an expanded presentation of N. Dash, organized by The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, and curated by Amy Smith-Stewart, Senior Curator.

#### **About the Artist**

**N. Dash** (b. 1980, Miami, Florida, USA) lives and works in New York, New York, USA. N. Dash's work spans painting, sculpture, photography and drawing and employs both natural and manmade materials, including pigments, adobe/mud, jute, graphite, fabric, and polystyrene. Across these materials, the artist's inimitable approach seeks to both record sensory and informational capacities of touch and render typically unseen conduits of energy: ecological, architectural, and corporeal.

N. Dash's work has been featured in solo exhibitions at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, USA (2019); Fondazione Giuliani, Rome, Italy (2017); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, USA (2014–15); and White Flag Projects, St. Louis, USA (2013). Group exhibitions include SFMOMA - San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, USA (2019); The Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia (2017); The Jewish Museum, New York, USA (2015); Palazzo Strozzi, Florence, Italy (2015); MAXXI, Rome, Italy (2014); and Abron Arts Center, New York, USA (2013).

#### **About the Curator**

**Abaseh Mirvali** is the Executive Director, Chief Curator, and CEO at the Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara, in Santa Barbara, California, USA. During her inaugural year as Chief Curator, Mirvali has presented the first solo U.S. West Coast show of Turin-based artist, Lara Favaretto, the U.S. West Coast solo museum debut show of American filmmaker and artist, James Benning, *James Benning: Quilts, Cigarettes & Dirt (Portraits of America)*, and the U.S. institutional debut of Ari Benjamin Meyers and his institution Kunsthalle for Music.

Mirvali is the author of the concept and program development of the 2013 edition of The Biennial of the Americas, where she served as CEO, Executive Director, and Comisaria from 2011 to 2013. She was the Chief Curator of Draft Urbanism, an innovative and groundbreaking exhibition of urban architectural interventions. Between 2005 and 2009, Mirvali was the Executive Director of the Colección/Fundación Jumex Arte Contemporáneo, where she consolidated and developed one of the most distinguished collections of contemporary art for a private institution in Latin America.

#### **Acknowledgements**

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Special thanks to Casey Kaplan, New York, USA; Mehdi Chouakri, Berlin, Germany; and Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium.

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#### **About Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara**

Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara (MCASB) is a non-profit, non-collecting museum dedicated to the exhibition, education, and cultivation of the art of our time. Formerly Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum (CAF), MCASB is the premier venue for contemporary art between Los Angeles and San Francisco. MCASB is located at the Paseo Nuevo Upper Arts Terrace in downtown Santa Barbara, California.