

## **For Immediate Release**

**Nathan Vincent**

***Locker Room***

**4 November – 23 December 2023**

**Opening Reception: Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 – 8:00pm**

Walter Maciel Gallery is pleased to present *Locker Room* by Los Angeles based artist, Nathan Vincent. For this show, Gallery 4 is transformed into a life-size version of a locker room crafted of yarn.

Gym locker rooms are traditionally seen as a private space for men to socialize and bond while preparing or cleaning up from a workout or sport. To some, it is regarded as a shrine for the hyper-masculine where fit men strut around naked showing off their physical accomplishments while others quietly attend to grooming themselves with a sense of isolation, judgment, inadequacy and fear. In Vincent's version of *Locker Room*, the lockers, benches, shower head towers and urinals are all presented as crocheted or knitted objects questioning the validity of masculinity and exploring gender roles within the prescribed norms while employing a traditional feminine craft to create a space that is steeped in masculine culture. Vincent questions our assumptions around objects and activities, calling to attention the impact our beliefs have on the way we define ourselves and others through the lens of what is culturally appropriate based on gender. The installation welcomes the viewer to walk through and ponder the act of undressing among others while considering how the concepts of safety, vulnerability, privacy, aggression, strength and agency all collide within the space.

The construction of the installation, which mostly goes unseen, is yet another aspect of its confrontation with the gender binary and expectations that accompany it. The armatures - materials harvested from the shelves of big box hardware stores: insulation foam, plywood, dryer venting, wood doweling, metal brackets - are concealed with intricately hand crocheted and knitted dressings reminiscent of domestic interiors. His interest in needle arts began at a very young age, learning how to crochet from his mother and eventually teaching himself to knit. After studying painting and drawing in college and questioning his uniqueness as a painter, he returned to his love of stitching and began to explore fiber arts as his primary medium creating sculptures in keeping with the Fiber Art movement artists of the 60's like Faith Wilding and Magdalena Abakanowicz. Other artists such as Eva Hesse whose work includes mixed media fabrics and materials, and Claes Oldenburg who creates large whimsical stitched Pop Art forms have greatly influenced Vincent's work in addition to contemporary artists, Martin Puryear and Nick Cave.

Vincent began his art career in New York City eventually relocating to Los Angeles in 2017. He studied art at Purchase College, State University of New York and received his BFA in 2004. He has exhibited in group shows throughout the Northeast and Western US including the recent iteration of *Queer Threads* curated by John Chaich at the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles, *Sew What?* curated by WMG artist, Jil Weinstock at the Children's Museum of the Arts in New York, *Role Play: Changing Ideas about Gender* at the Sun Valley Museum of Art in Idaho and *The Mysterious Content of Softness* at the Bellevue Arts Museum in Washington. In 2012, he participated in a residency at the Museum of Art and Design (MAD) in New York.