

**PATRICK MIKHAIL in Montréal is pleased to present
THE VANISHING WOMAN/ESCAMOTAGE D'UNE FEMME,
an exhibition of new works by Montréal artist
NATASCHA NIEDERSTRASS.**

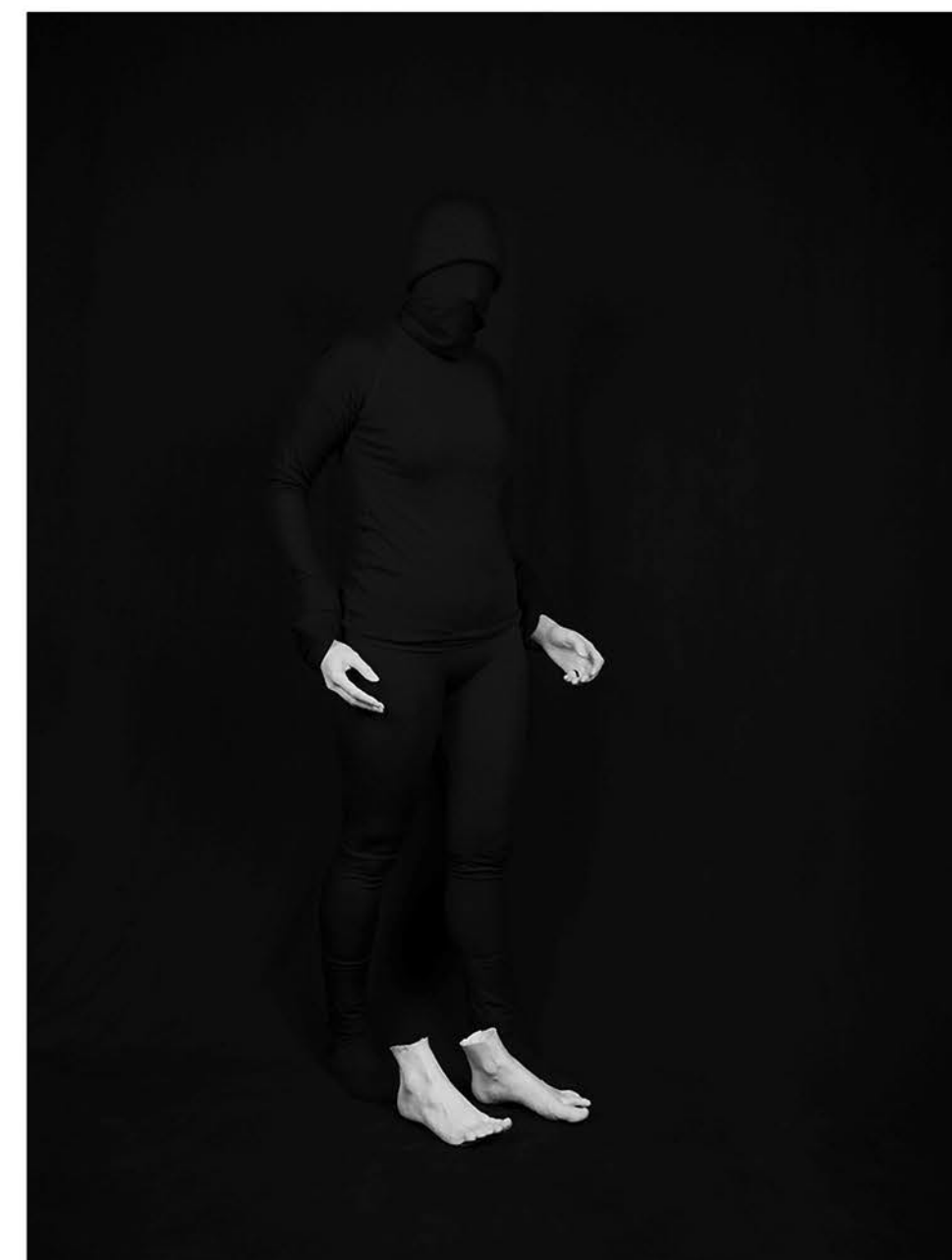
**NATASCHA NIEDERSTRASS
THE VANISHING WOMAN /
ESCAMOTAGE D'UNE FEMME**

With The Vanishing Woman/Escamotage d'une femme, Niederstrass surveys the appearance of the female body in 19th-century magic performances, casting a critical eye on this historical trope by drawing parallels with perceptions of women today. The once-frequent illusion, which featured magicians covering women with fabric or rugs to erase them from the stage, raises strong symbolic and even political considerations. For Niederstrass, the magic trick was a way to banish an unwelcome presence or make it invisible. The artist also draws an iconographic parallel with another Victorian phenomenon known as hidden mother photography, where women held their children in poses for the camera while hiding behind drapery, their silhouettes still partially discernable.

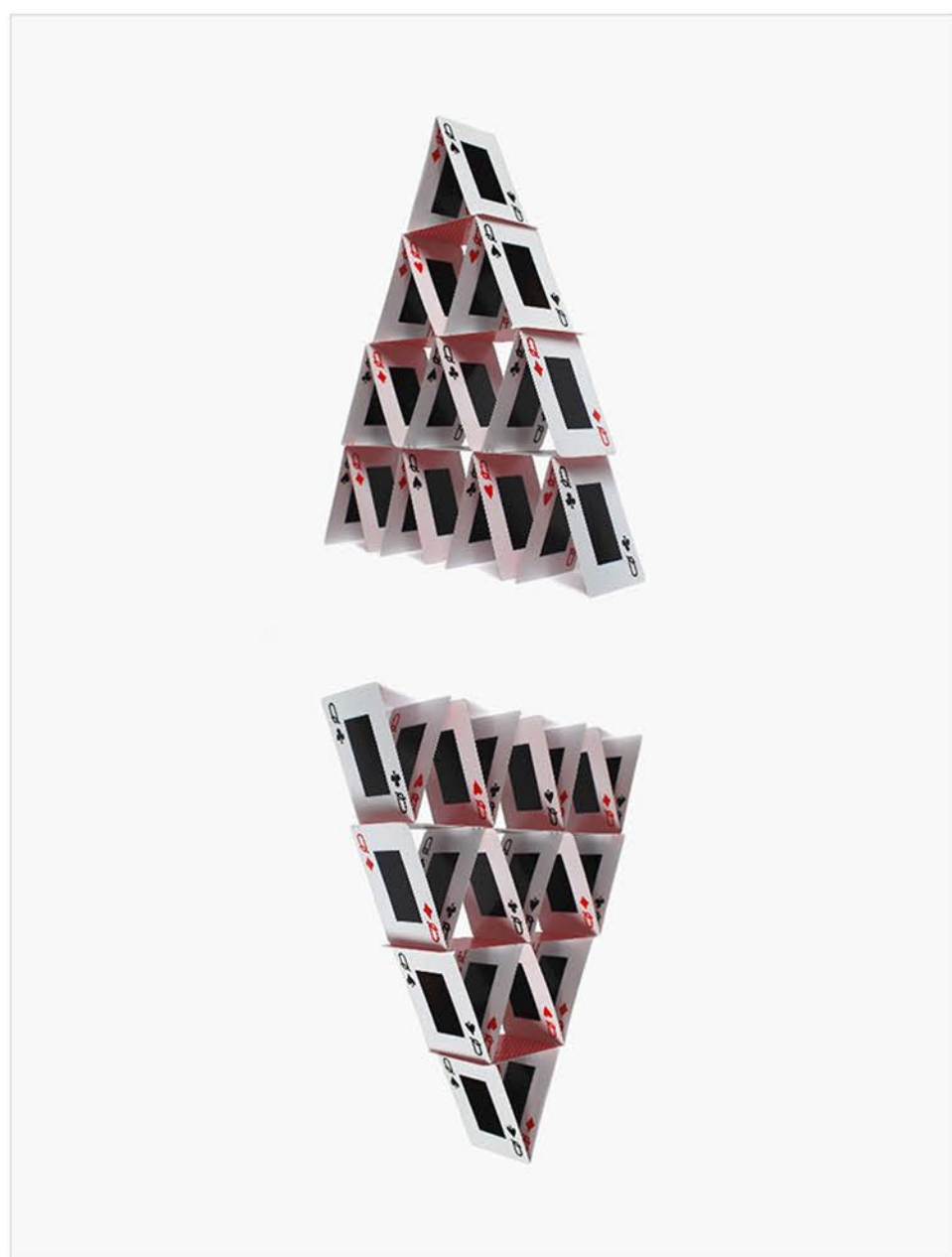
Niederstrass presents a new series created during her residency with VU. The artists allies photography and sculpture in a number of formal variations presented in a shadowy setting, alluding to the vanishing women scenarios so favoured by magicians. Fragmentary and enigmatic, the mysterious dark images suggest bodies lurking under folds of fabric. The variations on the motif invite viewers to reflect on the insidious violence inherent in mechanisms that render invisible or dehumanize the female body.



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Natascha Niederstrass
Sans titre (Disparition 7)
Ink Jet print on Hahnemühle paper
48 X 36 inches
2021 - 2022



Natascha Niederstrass
Sans titre (L'envers de la pyramide)
Ink Jet print on Hahnemühle paper
45 X 36 inches
2021 - 2022



Natascha Niederstrass
Sans titre (Lévitiation d'une dame)
Sculpture
15 X 18 X 15 inches
2021 - 2022

Natascha Niederstrass' photography and installations are steeped in the symbolic interrelationships she observes in visual culture and history. She constitutes narratives of phenomena marginalized by the dominant discourse, in the hopes of reclaiming a place for them in our perceptions of reality. Using video, photography and installation, Natascha Niederstrass' weaves references between art history, news, crime scene and horror cinema. She emphasizes the ambiguity of signs and cultural codes accepted as truths that are deceptive compared to a reality that escapes us.

Fascinated with narrative issues, she explores the possibilities offered by reconstruction methods, skillfully operating in the margins between truth and fiction. Niederstrass often chooses to use a forensic aesthetic, for it serves both as an approachable way for the general public to pry open the hermetic shell of contemporary art, and as a viable critical model for understanding art that relies on clues, obscurities, and residue. Niederstrass takes the viewer through the exciting process of reconstructing a story, a scene, a speculative action or an event excluded from the "visible."

A graduate of Concordia University in Montreal (BFA) and York University in Toronto (MFA), Natascha Niederstrass has had numerous solo and group exhibitions in galleries and artist-run centers. Her work is included in the collections of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, the Musée d'art de Joliette, the National Bank of Canada, the City of Longueuil, and the City of Laval. She has completed a residency at VU Photo in Quebec City in June 2021 to develop a new body of work, which was presented in 2022 as part of the 10th edition of the Manif d'Art de Québec. In the winter of 2021, she took part in a research residency at Centre SAGAMIE in collaboration with Saguenay artist Caroline Fillion. The result of their research was presented at Occurrence - espace d'art et d'essai contemporains and at Centre SAGAMIE. Her first artist book, Stress aigu, was published by Les Éditions Rodrigol in early 2022.

Cover:
Natascha Niederstrass | Sans titre (Dissimulée) | Ink Jet print on Hahnemühle paper | 2021-2022

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