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**ANDREW RAFACZ** is thrilled to announce *Tightrope Walker*, a solo exhibition of new wall works from Trish Tillman. The exhibition opens Friday, February 28th and continues through Saturday, April 12th, 2025. This is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

*"Tension is both the thing that helps one walk across; and also, what makes it so treacherous..."*

In *Tightrope Walker*, Trish Tillman navigates personal histories through memory and narrative form. She contemplates the grey areas of situations and relationships, as she questions the tools it takes in balancing the arduous, often doomed to fail tasks of our lives.

As memory attaches to time, place, and emotion as a witness, Tillman works to extract and reconfigure particular moments that have informed her practice and sense of self. Influenced by the DIY music and activist scene that she was a part of while growing up in Washington, DC; she combines an edgy ethos with the refinement of sophisticated materials she is well known for. The works in the exhibition are influenced by the interiors of lounges, clubs and theatrical venues— environments for entertaining the senses— with references ranging from punk rock to cabaret. Her works are generous and autobiographical— reaching into a place of trauma, softened through the lens of nostalgia.

Each piece in the exhibition is iconic, balancing significant moments in time. Whether it is a handkerchief complete with a custom embroidered blood and teardrop pattern or a pink leather scone-cum corset, Tillman expands on themes of identity, gender, and societal grooming, inviting viewers to question their perceptions of innocence, eroticism, and cultural ideals. The interplay of industrial textures with more whimsical or sexualized imagery often results in works that are as unsettling as they are playful.

Walking through the exhibition, her puffed compositions are embellished with garment hardware, precise top stitching, and use soft and luscious materials like leather and vinyl, which emit a sheen or sparkle that show off the tactile properties of the fabric. They appear sweet, however not innocent.

In *Witness Marks*, a plush tail twists out of an eyelashed opening like soft serve ice-cream. A beckoning finger is seen reflected in the mirrored 'eye' which sets the scene for spying in on a steamy shower scene. In the mirror, layered with a clear UV coating of the same pattern found in the 'tail', the finger wears only a lacquered red nail. These flirtatious, come-hither-like notions are met with restrictions— highlighting the conversation between people pleasing and consent. The tempting materials build a sense of hierarchy within Tillman's narratives, blurring the lines and expectations between a body objectified, fetish and kink, and unsafe touches. As our eyes graze over the surfaces, a power dynamic is at play, leaving the viewer to decide who they are and what they bring from within themselves to walk the line.

**TRISH TILLMAN** (Born in Chicago, IL, 1975) currently lives in and works in Brooklyn, NY. She holds an MFA from School of Visual Arts. Tillman's work has been widely exhibited; solo exhibitions include ANDREW RAFACZ (Chicago, IL), Asya Geisberg Gallery (NY, NY), and Civilian Art Projects (DC). Group exhibitions include Present Company (NY, NY), HILDE (Los Angeles, CA), Regina Rex (NY, NY), The Visual Arts Center of Richmond (Richmond, VA), Emerson Dorsch, (Miami, FL), Tiger Strikes Asteroid (Philadelphia, PA), and Jawahar Kala Kendra (Jaipur, INDIA). She is a recipient of the Hopper Prize, a Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant, a Fountainhead Residency, the VisArts + Quirk Residency and the Jaipur Kala Chaupal. Tillman's work has been featured in several art fairs including FUTURE FAIR, UNTITLED, SPRING/BREAK and NADA. Her work has been reviewed in several publications including ARTFORUM, Sculpture Magazine, ArtFCity, Juxtapose and Artsy Magazine. Tillman is also an educator and has been a professor and lecturer at Monmouth University, George Washington University, the Corcoran School of Art, and Rutgers University. She has been on multiple panel discussions including the CAA Annual Conference, ArtTable, and the National Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. Tillman will be a resident artist at the Mildred Thompson Legacy Project in Atlanta and has an upcoming project at the South Street Seaport in New York City.