

## PRESS RELEASE

### Aria McManus *Relieviation Works*

November 11 – December 16, 2017

Opening Reception  
Saturday, November 11  
6 – 9 pm

AALLA is pleased to present *Relieviation Works*, an exhibition of new works by Aria McManus. Drawing on her background in critical product design, McManus probes the intersection of innovation, perception, and utility in contemporary culture.



An interactive office environment serves as the mundane, all-too-familiar setting for the repurposing and enhancement of common, utilitarian objects, such as headsets, staplers, and calendars. In these creations—*Chakra Calling*, *Acustapler*, *Illuminame*, and *VitaCal*—the objective, one-size-fits-all nature of the office collides with the subjectivity of the body; function meets belief. Along with *Personal Growth Lamp* and *Infinite Filter*, the efficacy of these objects depends not only on their design but also on the conviction in their ability to heal. Influenced in part by her own experience with illness, McManus plays with the viewer's expectations in order to explore the placebo effect and its potential to complicate the notion of utility itself.

Video and wall works expound on the usage of these inventions. McManus manipulates familiar tools of capitalism: Advertisements, commercials, and patent paperwork coalesce around the objects, imbuing them with recognizable markers of authenticity in a culture that values commodification over innovation, and profit over wellbeing. In blurring the line between product and art object, *Relieviation Works* reconceptualizes the role of value in contemporary art.

Aria McManus (b. 1989, St. Paul, MN) is an artist based in New York City. Her work has been exhibited in various solo and group shows, including at 99 Cent Gallery, Fisher Parrish, Muddguts, the New Museum (all New York), Ed Varie (Los Angeles), Sunset Drive Gallery (Miami), and Biennale Internationale Design (Saint-Etienne, France). Aria is a founding member of Auto Body, a curatorial collective based in Bellport, Long Island. *Relieviation Works* is her first solo exhibition in Los Angeles.