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robert(a) marshall, *Bardo Road*

April 18 - May 23, 2021

Wednesday-Sunday, noon-7pm, appointments are required

*Carlos Castaneda, American Trickster*

robert(a) marshall and Matthew Sharpe in dialogue

Sun May 2, 7:30pm EST on [participantafterdark.art](http://participantafterdark.art)

The Bardo is, in the Buddhist tradition, a transitional state between incarnations. In robert(a) marshall's work, the Bardo is a multifaceted metaphor, suggesting the period after their mother's death, the shadowy interregnum of the Trump regime, and the isolated, suspended time of Covid. In a body of work completed before the pandemic, originally scheduled to be shown at Participant in June 2020, they took iPhone pictures, through car windows, during travels throughout the U.S. and Mexico. These were then printed on reflective surfaces – vinyl, Mylar, Dibond. This elusive work explores the uncertain and contingent nature of perception by embodying the performative aspect of seeing.

In a second body of work, completed during the pandemic, marshall used dance and Zoom video to investigate the relationship between performance and identity formation. Gender is understood in this ongoing project as something always in creation, always being done. These videos, rather than being expressions of a fixed, specific identity, are explorations in which possibilities are conjured. They explore the liminal zone between virtual and physical spaces. And, using family photos and found texts, they investigate how the past haunts the present, specifically the ways in which, for the artist, the current pandemic has evoked the AIDS crisis. Bringing the work full circle, stills from the videos were once again printed on reflective surfaces such as Slickrock paper and mirrored Dibond.

A catalogue of the exhibition is available [here](#).

Marshall, who is also a novelist, is currently completing *American Trickster*, their biography of the faux-anthropologist and cult leader Carlos Castaneda. Among the many themes examined in this fifteen-year project are the ways in which the interpersonal and intersubjective nature of perception can be manipulated by charismatic narcissists. *American Trickster* is due out from University of California Press in 2022; *Trickster*, a podcast co-produced by the artist, has just been released. Ephemera related to the book will be on view.

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Marshall will join **Matthew Sharpe** in dialogue on **Sun May 2, 7:30pm**. Sharpe is the author of novels *You Were Wrong*, *Jamestown*, *The Sleeping Father*, and *Nothing Is Terrible*, and the web-based project *Very short stories r us*. He has received fellowships from the National Endowment of the Arts and the NY Foundation for the Arts. He has taught in graduate and undergrad programs at Bard College, Wesleyan University, Columbia University, Pratt Institute, New College of Florida, and elsewhere.

**robert(a) marshall/Robert Luisza Marshall** was born in Eugene, Oregon. They grew up in Phoenix, Arizona. Their visual work has been exhibited at Studio 10 Gallery; Baxter Street; Richard Anderson Fine Arts; The Drawing Center; Art in General; White Columns; Caren Golden Gallery; Steffany Martz Gallery; Bronwyn Keenan Gallery; Derek Eller Gallery; Triple Candie; Thread Waxing Space; Amy Lipton Gallery; Zilkha Gallery, Wesleyan University; Wessel O'Connor Gallery; Peter Kilchmann Gallery (Zurich); Centro Cultural Ricardo Rojas (Buenos Aires); 2B Gallery (Budapest); Art and Idea (Mexico City), and numerous other venues. Their novel, *A Separate Reality* was published by Carrol & Graf in 2006. *American Trickster*, their biography of Carlos Castaneda, is forthcoming from the University of California Press, and they served as co-producer for the podcast, *Trickster* (directed by Frank Horton). Their prose and poetry have appeared in *Salon*, *N + 1 Online*, *The Evergreen Review*, *The Barcelona Review*, *The Michigan Review*, *Another Chicago Magazine*, *Waxwing*, *Confrontation*, *Public Books*, *Event*, *Taint*, *Eclectica*, *Blue Lake Review*, *Ping Pong Journal*, *Crack the Spine*, *Apt*, *Ducts*, and other publications. They have been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, a Lambda Literary Award, and they were the recipient of the 2016 Hazel Rowley Prize, given by BIO, the Biographer's International Organization. They are the recipient of grants and fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, Yaddo, MacDowell, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the Banff Center, and Ragdale. They live in NYC.

**Safety protocols:** Appointments are required and are limited to two people. Visitors and staff must wear a mask at all times and practice social distancing.

Image: **robert(a) marshall**, *Bardo Road 1*, 2021, UV curable ink on mirrored Dibond. [An entity resembling an ink blob (the artist in motion) seems to huddle in the lower left of a highly abstracted purple-gray landscape, which may be a car window. A yellow light hovers in the center of the picture.]

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PARTICIPANT INC is located at 253 East Houston Street between Norfolk and Suffolk Streets. The closest trains are the F (2nd Ave) and the J/M/Z (Essex/Delancey); the closest wheelchair accessible stop is the 4/6 (Bleecker/Lafayette). Entry is on grade and the gallery is barrier free throughout with an all gender, wheelchair accessible bathroom. Service animals are welcome.