

PRESS RELEASE

# FIVE DOMESTIC ACTS

MAY 11-12, 2019 [MOTHER'S DAY WEEKEND] PALO ALTO, CA

In **FIVE DOMESTIC ACTS**, interdisciplinary artist Martha Sakellariou temporarily inhabits a residential house with an in-situ exhibit composed of video, text, sound, collected objects and improvised dance. Opening with a live performance on Saturday, May 11th and followed by an open house on Sunday, May 12th, **FIVE DOMESTIC ACTS** is the third in a series of projects where the artist intentionally moves away from the traditional physical and social spaces of experiencing art. In an effort to tell a story of womanhood and domesticity, Sakellariou reclaims the very space where home things happen and creates a social, ephemeral experience in a Palo Alto residence. There, she explores the identity of the woman as hostess, dweller and homemaker.

For this project Martha Sakellariou partners with dancer/choreographer *Lauren Daniluk*, *Kristin Damrow & Company* and several women from her local community.

The live event, a one-off performative set of acts takes place inside a residential home. Two dancers from San Francisco-based dance company, *Kristin Damrow & Company*, engage with the interior of the dwelling's industrial size kitchen and open plan areas by spontaneously developing movement and moments of exploring body and space dynamics. The female body in the domestic space is at play. The acts performed, reflect the diversity of domestic experience and focus on scenes from mundane to mystical, from static to energetic. The practices and rituals of a private world and its everyday moments that often go unnoticed and exist without anyone questioning their presence are illuminated.

The exhibits and performances in **FIVE DOMESTIC ACTS** explore the collective experiences and perspectives from various women and eras that are intertwined with threads of the same narrative. Without a specific beginning and end, or a descriptive path to follow, the story is told simultaneously in a video performance, an evolving wall installation, a curated archive of contributed objects, and small interconnected events that introduce the physical reality of the domestic body. Direct references in the wallpaper and garments can be traced to *Charlotte Perkins Gilman's* pivotal piece *The Yellow Wallpaper*, while *Sappho's* excerpts of poetry appear on domestic items. This approach embraces the collective spirit of 1970's art project *Womanhouse* and its effort to present multiple perceptions and interpretations of womanhood.

In a parallel storytelling process, narratives of female empowerment and celebration of womanhood associated with the home, co-exist with notions of entrapment and oppression. And 19th century's "cult of domesticity and true womanhood" value system, forms a symbiotic dialogue with contemporary gestures and mid-century manuals of female appearances.

## BIOS

**Martha Sakellariou** creates immersive on-site art exhibits using video, sound, photography, food, printed and textile media. Her work is centered on the female body and explores notions of living, public and private space, domesticity and the female identity. She frequently collaborates with other creatives to produce interdisciplinary work that invites social engagement. Martha has exhibited and curated projects independently and collaboratively in Europe and the US. Born in Athens Greece, she studied painting at the Athens School of Fine Art (BA/MA) and printmaking at the Royal College of Art (MA). She lived and worked in London before moving to Palo Alto in 2013. [marthasakellariou.com](http://marthasakellariou.com)

**Lauren Daniluk** performed with Miami City Ballet and then attended Carnegie Mellon University. There she founded the Dancers Symposium and presented curated dance performances. In New York City, she fundraised for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater; and was the Director of Marketing and Public Relations for The New 42nd Street, Inc. While there she met choreographer Karole Armitage, and became the Executive Director of her company Armitage GONE! Dance. After moving to Palo Alto with her family in 2017, Lauren now consults with non-profits organizations.

**Kristin Damrow** is the Artistic Director of Kristin Damrow & Company, a San Francisco based contemporary dance company. Kristin grew up on a rural farm in Wisconsin then lived in Chicago while earning her B.A. in Dance from Columbia College before moving to the Bay in 2010. Since then, she has choreographed and produced over 15 new dance works for venues including ODC Theater and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. Her work has been featured in Fast Company, Backstage Magazine, KQED, and SF/Arts Monthly. [kristindamrow.com](http://kristindamrow.com)

#### PARTICIPANTS & CREDITS

Heather Arnett and Victoria Dombrowski dancers from KDC

*The Wardrobe Archives*, a collective exhibit presented as part of the FIVE DOMEST ACTS includes contributions by Jessica Resmini, Keva Dine, Elizabeth Alexis, Hilary Somers, Laurence Pichot, Lauren Daniluk, Jennifer Lee, Judith Van Raalten, Lucinda Newton Dunn, Maria Brown, Nelly Capra, Mary Kraiss, Amy Okada, Larisa Usich, Amy Kacher, Sophie Hones, Yiyi Zeng and more.

Meringues and bread contributed by Karen Chae and Nelly Capra.

Exhibition hosted by Christine Egy Rose.

Event photography by Kathy LaBarre.