CURATOR’S TALK WITH JESSICA COCHRAN
Tuesday, November 14, 4:30–5:30pm

All exhibitions and receptions are FREE and open to the public.
Ideas about the role of the artist in society have been percolating broadly in discourse on art and politics. In the summer issue of Artforum Simon Critchley addressed this wave within the context of the politics of everyday life. “In the situation we find ourselves in, there are two powerful, but opposed, temptations: to participate, and to withdraw.” In this year’s Venice Biennale, curator Christine Macel asserts that the “artistic act” itself “is an act of resistance, of liberation, and of generosity.”

Against the backdrop of a discordant presidency, Human Human considers the array of ways that recent artworks register as political, and responsive. The impetus for the exhibition grew out of months of conversations with artists about urgency and agency, particularly in relation one’s work in the studio and one’s life as a citizen.

We all have a different relationship to art and politics. Some works were created as a means of retreat, regeneration, or peace. Restorative for the artist, as well for the viewer, these works mobilize a new imaginary, or simply find a space apart. Using formal strategies, some works obliquely visualize ethics of critique and models of resistance; and others directly engage an aesthetics of activism.

By bringing together works across a spectrum of making, Human Human creates a space to consider art and affect in relation to the twin impulses of escapism and action. What is the role of art in relation to world-making, from the studio to the street?

What is the dimensionality of citizenship within chaos?

Works in this exhibition all produce meaning that begins with, but transcends the logic of the studio. This means that they are artful in their politics — these are art-political objects. But what is most enduring about this work what we might call successive composition. Each one takes from the world of things and from the realms of ideas, and builds another layer, makes another move. These works are our polyphony, our many contours, they are our emergent present.

“...people must not only struggle against existing institutions. They must make a philosophical / spiritual leap and become more human human beings. In order to change/transform the world, they must change/transform themselves.”

GWENDOLYN BROOKS
The Ralph Arnold Gallery is part of the Department of Fine and Performing Arts at Loyola University Chicago. Our goal is to foster conversations about contemporary art between local artists, our student population, and the community at large. The gallery offers lectures by selected artists and curators working in the Midwest and Chicago. All events are free and open to the public.

We strive to cultivate exploration and growth through exhibitions, workshops, artist lectures and educational programing that support Loyola's interdisciplinary ideology.

We prioritize the unique position of the artist as educator, engaging and exposing our diverse educational community to every discipline of Art offered by the Fine Arts department.