

Catriona Jeffries

Rochelle Goldberg

*Sun Moon Stars*

Contemporary Art Gallery,  
Vancouver

June 7–September 8, 2024

Vancouver

Rochelle Goldberg  
Installation view, *Sun Moon Stars*, Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, 2024



Rochelle Goldberg  
*Equal Parts I*, 2019, aluminum, copper pennies, glass bowls, installation dimensions variable



Rochelle Goldberg  
Installation view, *Sun Moon Stars*, Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, 2024



Rochelle Goldberg  
*Partial View*, 2023, bronze, aluminum, installation dimensions variable



Rochelle Goldberg  
*Partial View*, 2023, bronze, aluminum, installation dimensions variable



Rochelle Goldberg  
*Partial View*, 2023, bronze, aluminum, installation dimensions variable



Rochelle Goldberg  
*Partial View*, 2023, bronze, aluminum, installation dimensions variable





Rochelle Goldberg  
*Partial View* (detail), 2023, bronze, aluminum, installation dimensions variable



Rochelle Goldberg

*Obstructed View*, 2023, flour, copper, aluminum, dispersion paint, cans, bronze, wire, 96 x 120 x 204 in. (244 x 305 x 518 cm)



Rochelle Goldberg  
*Cans*, 2024, bronze, aluminum, installation dimensions variable



Rochelle Goldberg  
Installation view, *Sun Moon Stars*, Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, 2024



Rochelle Goldberg  
Installation view, *Sun Moon Stars*, Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, 2024



Rochelle Goldberg

*Wands* (detail), 2023, found wood, aluminum, cellulose, dispersion paint, glitter, wire, 96 x 132 x 204 in. (244 x 335 x 518 cm)



Rochelle Goldberg

*Wands* (detail), 2023, found wood, aluminum, cellulose, dispersion paint, glitter, wire, 96 x 132 x 204 in. (244 x 335 x 518 cm)



Rochelle Goldberg  
*Lights*, 2023, augmented readymade vanity light, wire, aluminum, installation dimensions variable





Rochelle Goldberg  
Installation view, *Sun Moon Stars*, Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, 2024



As with many of Goldberg's projects over the past several years, this installation finds its genesis in the story of Mary of Egypt, a fifth-century saint who left her worldly existence after a period of sexual 'impurity' to live ascetically in the desert. Traditionally understood as an icon of repentance, Goldberg instead approaches Mary as a figure of radical empathy, someone who escaped a material world to become one with her landscape; over decades of exposure, Mary's body would slowly become indistinguishable from her environment, until her eventual death when her corpse was found fully preserved in—and by—the desert.

This impossible passage between physical states is a vital jumping off point for *Sun Moon Stars*, with Goldberg harnessing a shifting set of temporal, formal and material references to produce a scene in a state of apparent flux. At the centre of the installation, Goldberg offers a pair of Marys in fragmentary state, each tethered to the floor with cans, their precarious figures cobbled together from a range of cast forms—vegetal matter, a pregnant torso, the face of a 20th-century pinup doll—to suggest a body in a process of decomposition or recomposition. In *Obstructed View*, the artist situates Mary amidst a makeshift shelter built from provisions: baguettes, a nod to the saint's decades-long subsistence on three loaves of endlessly replicating bread; and cans cast in aluminum and bronze, the latter ruptured in form. A series of wands and vanity lights punctuate the installation, evoking both a realm of mutability and transformation, and anchoring our presence in the scene.

References to reproduction, reevaluation and renewal circulate throughout the installation both materially and conceptually, with Goldberg locating in Mary a kind of contemporary immaculate—an incorruptible body at once post-purity and post-decay, collapsing distinctions between self, other and environment. Recasting here the ancient archetype of the penitent in dialogue with the industrially produced desire associated with the mid-century pinup model, Goldberg ultimately evokes a desert of no answer, posing larger questions about how inherited structures linger, rot and recirculate.