

Means of Egress: The Body and Its Double at B. Ingrid Olson's "All Lock No Key"

B. Ingrid Olson's solo exhibition at Corbett vs. Dempsey deepens her investigation into doubling, desire and the limits of perception.

by Annette LePique | March 25, 2026



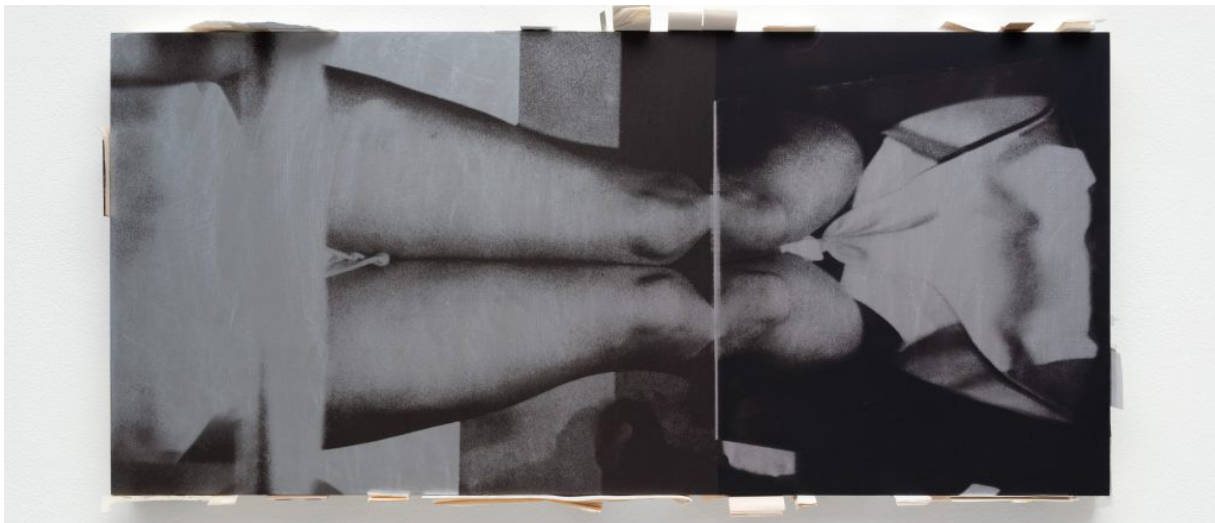
B. Ingrid Olson, "as an articulated lair as an errant plane," 2026, acrylic ink, acrylic paint, gesso, colored pencil, glue, hardboard, MDF, wood, wood glue, screws, 25.5 × 50.125 × 2.25 inches.

In a 2019 text by writer Kate Zambreno, Zambreno responded to B. Ingrid Olson's 2019 Renaissance Society exhibition by citing French author Hélène Cixous' 1972 reading of Freud's essay on the "uncanny." In Cixous' interpretation of Freud, by way of Zambreno, we learn that the uncanny forces us not only to face a text, but face "its hesitating shadow, and their double escapade." This process of doubling, analysis by way of another's diagnosis, examination through translation, along with a confrontation of this stuttering facsimile, the reflection of a realization upon your double's face, feels appropriate for B. Ingrid Olson's newest Corbett vs. Dempsey show, "All Lock No Key." "All Lock" marks a moment where Olson not only continues her longstanding interest in the dialectical exchange between space, image and the body, but forces viewers to confront the desires that drive them to name the constitutive elements of that relationship. What images does your body hold? What exactly do you see when you look my way?

The show's text proposes the possibility of violence; it hints that Olson's work could suggest evisceration, surgery, some sort of violent dismemberment, the abject and erotic. The text then likens such potential to poet Charles Olson's (of no relation to the artist) conception of "proprioceptive" prose. C. Olson defined the idea of a "proprioceptive" text in a 1965 work in which he wrote

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“Proprioception the cavity of the body, in which the organs are slung: the viscera, or interoceptive, the old ‘psychology’ of feeling, the heart; of desire, the live; of sympathy, the ‘bowels’; of courage,” a line which I understand not only to hint at our sixth-sense awareness of the body, our knowledge of our motions and feelings as we move through the world, but to signal his rhetorical move later in the text where he specifically twins the human soul to the body. For Olson, the soul is then both the body and its prime mover, something in us and also just slightly beyond our reach.



B. Ingrid Olson, “Underfoot and Overhead (Bachelor, decay, I was then a we, can it be that I am the subject?),” 2013–2026, acrylic ink, acrylic paint, milk paint, drawing paper, tissue paper, inkjet prints, laser prints, transparency, silver gelatin prints, vellum, wax paper, developed photographic film, synthetic fabric, plastic sheeting, aluminum tape, artist’s tape, staples, gesso, hardboard, wood, glue, screws, 16.5 × 33.25 × 2.5 inches.

Again this idea of doubling, of the us, the you, the me and the I firmly situated within our skin, touching the us, the you, the me, the I slightly just out of frame, peeking through the veil, feels apropos to the artist’s investment in the body and its echoes, and how these reverberations order one’s understanding of the world.

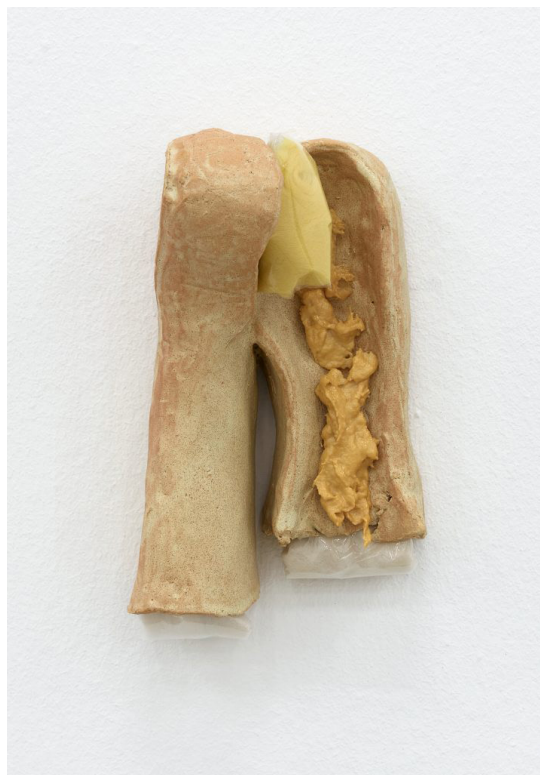
In the center of the gallery sits Olson’s imposing architectural installation based on the Corbett vs. Dempsey video room, “Realia for punishment or distinction (is this a human problem? If so I’d like to keep it)” (2026). In the center of the piece, amidst two large brutalist structures reminiscent of a Kafkaesque office mailroom, sits a component from Olson’s 2023–2025 piece “Plen Cycle [excerpt from a Feminine Thought].” Near the base of “Cycle,” white ribbons trimmed with red undulate upon the floor as a parabolic reflector sits upon a shining black foundation. Inside the reflector strips of either glazed ceramic or gypsum wind into a fleshy mound of liver terrine. I perhaps reveal too much of myself with that description for my own abject thoughts of bureaucratic nightmares and processed meats speak to my own distaste for disorientation. I am a double Taurus, a guarded control freak, both the rock and the hard place. Asking me to question my own awareness of my body does not come easily nor naturally to me.



B. Ingrid Olson, “Artists Book,” 2007–2024, aluminum, Plexiglas, drawings (includes “Reverse Clock Painting,” 2024; “Rebirth Head in Shirt,” 2008; “Mask Drawing,” 2008; “Proof for Errata,” 2015; “Dark Drawing,” 2011; “Architect’s Thought,” 2019; “Drawing for Why Does my Vestibule Hurt,” 2022), 11 × 14.5 × 2 inches.

This is not to say I disliked the show or found it wanting when placed within Olson’s artistic trajectory. I appreciate a challenge, the necessity of negotiation, the sincerity of a request to look, to really look at uncertainty with rigor and care. This constant intercession, translation and dialogue, the buzzing fumbling warmth that can exist between I, you and we presents an endearing vision of humanity. I think of Olson’s 2022 interview with Bomb Magazine, where she remarks on the Sisyphean nature of ordering our own corners of the world, “there is such a personal and faulty quality to indexes even though they seem like the sort of thing that should be clinically objective. I think that is maybe the point of contact in my work as well: admitting the subjectivity or messiness within structuring devices.” I see a similar admission of such split-side cock-eyed, utterly human, wiring in pieces like “Lover’s Vase” (2022) or “Sister’s Pit” (2022); two works that speak to the intimacy of intimacy, the closeness between two people that often defies words and exists in a netherworld state of the untranslatable.

“All Lock” asks a great deal of its viewers, as we must traverse Olson’s lexical gaps with a certain degree of bravery, for we do not know if she’ll catch us when we fall. Did I fall? Did she catch me? You’ll have to see the show and decide for yourself.



B. Ingrid Olson, "Sister's Pit," 2022, glazed porcelain, wool, epoxy, plastic, wood, 9.5 × 5.5 × 4.5 inches.