

Eleanor Harwood Gallery presents:

***Playmate***  
**Lee Materazzi**

**Reception for the Artist**

Jan. 10th, 2026, 5-7 pm

**Exhibit Dates**

Jan. 10th - Feb. 28th 2026



**Lee Materazzi, *PLAYMATE* Installation view**

**Eleanor Harwood Gallery** is pleased to announce Lee Materazzi's fourth solo exhibition with the gallery.

PLAYMATE includes photographs and sculptures created using “materials that are on hand - last week’s garbage, the jeans that have taken on my same posture, that one remaining shoe, Janis’ pears” as well as drawings, jewels, toys and children’s detritus.

Materazzi’s work has transformed over the years and has become a stand-in diary for stages of life, moving from early motherhood to a parent of a now teenager. The works from 2019 featured yarn, tempera paint, colorful pipe cleaners, googly eyes, etc., all children's craft materials. She then moved into a series of works, in 2023, where her body is clearly becoming more independent from her children, a re-sexualized, and sensualized being.

PLAYMATE moves us into more conceptual territory, still using some of the bits and pieces of childhood, but now cast in resin, like a fixed talisman, of a time nearly gone by. The concerns in this body of work are more formal but remain performative and diaristic. PLAYMATE's "diary entries" are more about the ordinary objects around us, heightening their aesthetics, such as the bronze extension cord pieces, "sister sister" and the beautiful piece "Tatiana's Flowers" that memorializes a bouquet sent to Lee by one of her best friends.

In *Goldstar Crotch*, Materazzi uses hundreds of gold star stickers—the kind used to reward good work in elementary school—to cover a pair of jeans, a molded foot, and a shoe. She props this lower body on an orange chair and photographs it. The familiar gold star becomes a marker of childhood, humorously redeployed to commend herself—acknowledging the labor of both artist and mother.

In *The Last Piece of Fruit* Materazzi has covered her jeans and T-shirt and a banana in textured silver tape. She cleverly places the original banana sticker back on the silvered fruit and places the banana in the back jeans pocket like an oversized hair comb from the 80s. Her stance looks like Bruce Springsteen's on the *Born in the USA* album cover as well as points to the humor of Maurizio Cattelan's *Comedian* (the banana famously taped to the wall). The work references these cultural touchstones while standing firmly on its own, doubling down on a wry commentary on America and its absurdities.

This is a show that rewards slow looking, as meaning emerges through connections between the title and the repeated acts of doubling throughout the exhibition. Materazzi's body is doubled by formed denim that still holds her shape, doubled again in casts of her hands. Two sets of knees appear, embedded with each daughter's objects in resin. Extension cords are doubled in *sister sister*. Camouflage recurs, functioning both as surface and texture, and as a means of obfuscation.

Even the title carries dual meaning: *PLAYMATE* as a single word, or split into *play* and *mate*, opening further interpretive possibilities. These works move beyond formal excellence in sculpture and photography, offering layers of meaning that are at once deeply personal and broadly resonant. The result is a richly satisfying, multilayered exhibition.

### **Artist Bio**

Lee Materazzi is a contemporary artist from Miami, FL now living in San Francisco, CA. Materazzi uses her body as a medium alongside color and texture, at times responding to remnants of material or work left by her children in the studio. Her compositions are off-kilter and investigate autonomy- rejecting acceptable social norms that regulate the human body. Materazzi's works are considered sculpturally, but exist only temporarily. She documents what she creates with medium format photography to preserve it. Her work has been shown internationally and is a part of numerous public art collections including The Margulies Collection at the Warehouse, The Sagamore Collection, the Scholl Collection at World Class Boxing, the Schnitzer Museum, and The Perez Art Museum where she was recently included in "My Body My Rules."

**About Eleanor Harwood Gallery**

Eleanor Harwood Gallery opened September 2006 in the Mission District and is now located in San Francisco's premier gallery complex, the Minnesota Street Project. The gallery specializes in work with complex craft and concept, exhibiting painting, drawing, sculpture, textiles and photography by emerging to mid-career artists. The roster includes artists that are represented in major American, European and Asian collections. The gallery actively promotes and encourages career growth for represented artists.

**Location**

1275 Minnesota Street, Suite 105, San Francisco, CA 94107

**Hours**

Tuesday-Saturday 11 am-5:00 pm and by appointment

**Contact**

(p) 415.867.7770

(e) [eleanor@eleanorharwood.com](mailto:eleanor@eleanorharwood.com)