

## *AN INVENTORY OF TOOLS FOR COPING* Elsa Mora

Encapsulating Elsa Mora's efforts to process and understand her experience, *An Inventory of Tools for Coping* revolves around the universal themes of crisis, recovery and healing.

47 Orchard Street, New York City

Dates: September 9 – November 19, 2023

Opening Reception: Saturday, September 9, 6-8 PM



*WRESTLE*, 2023  
Paper and glue

Image courtesy of the artist and Thomas Nickles Project

*All art is autobiographical.*  
Federico Fellini

New York, NY – Thomas Nickles Project is pleased to announce the first solo exhibition with the gallery of Cuban-born artist Elsa Mora. Throughout the last decade, Mora's artistic work has explored the complexities of the human experience, with its extraordinary creative potential to transform personal suffering and setbacks. Her forthcoming exhibition, *An Inventory of Tools for Coping* will bring together diverse series of works in various media, that includes glazed ceramics, paper collage, and paintings on wood. Beautiful and disorienting, like emotions themselves, the imagery of *An Inventory of Tools for Coping* plays with abstraction, organic form, and dys/functionality.

The exhibited pieces are connected, sharing the same DNA as if family, each artwork a response and record by Mora in tangible form, following a series of traumatic events in 2019. Her artist's practice is process orientated, with a deep respect and love of materials. She works playfully with the technical limitations of clay or paper, to allow opportunities for surprise and inspired solutions, which act as helpful metaphors for resolving interpersonal and life problems. Collages of overlaid teardrop cut-outs are meditative works of following flowing thoughts. A porcelain form (*Dysfunctional Object*, 2023) is a visual poem, both to the value of a non-functional object and to those recovering from depression, with their fragile feelings of self-worth. Alongside her art, Mora is interested in the science and study of the brain, and that knowledge enables much of the humor and poignancy expressed in her work. As she says "*Art was an opportunity that I found through my mind. It's a survival tool.*"

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Elsa Mora (b. Holguín, Cuba in 1971) is an artist and curator. A recipient of the UNESCO-Aschberg Bursaries for Artists, she was born and raised in Cuba and moved to Los Angeles in 2001, where she lived until 2014. Elsa Mora's work reflects on issues of identity, connectivity, and survival. Through a variety of media, she explores philosophical questions associated with isolation, the invisible, and bringing order into chaos. Among other materials, Mora has been fascinated by paper and its unassuming nature, which she sees as a metaphor for the mind and its endless potential for transformation. Her autistic son, Diego, has been an important source of inspiration in Mora's latest works as well.

Elsa's art has been exhibited worldwide in art galleries and museums. She taught at the Vocational School of Arts in Camagüey, Cuba, and has been a visiting artist at the Art Institute of Chicago, San Francisco State University, the Art Institute of Boston, the MoMA Design Store, and the National Gallery of Art, among others. Her work is in the permanent collection of the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C.; the Long Beach Museum of Art, California; and the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at the University of Oregon. Mora has collaborated as an illustrator with such organizations as the Museum of Modern Art, Chronicle Books, The New York Review of Books, Penguin Random House, The Oprah Magazine, Cosmopolitan, and teNeues, among others.

Mora is one of the founding members of ArtYard, a contemporary art center based in Frenchtown, New Jersey, where she is artistic director and curator.

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**Additional images available upon request.**

**Hours: Wed – Sun 11am – 6pm, Thurs 11am – 7pm.**

**\*LES Gallery Evening: Open until 8PM on Second Sundays  
and Third Thursdays**



*DYSFUNCTIONAL OBJECT, 2023*

Porcelain

Image courtesy of the artist and Thomas Nickles Project