

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**April 25, 2023**

# Practiced Play

**New works by Matthew Russo**  
On view May 6–June 10, 2023

**Opening reception**  
Saturday, May 6, 2023, 5–7pm  
1353 U St NW, Washington, DC 20009



Installation view of *Matthew Russo: Practiced Play*. Photo courtesy of Hamiltonian Artists

**Washington, DC:** Hamiltonian Artists is pleased to present Matthew Russo's solo exhibition *Practiced Play*. Rooted in the scholarship of "Objects and Things," Russo's work explores concrete knowns and abstract unknowns. Objects are that which we can determine, observe, understand, and know, while Things are abstract. We may be able to observe Things, but we cannot fully make sense of them. Over the years, Russo has compiled an extensive catalog of objects: plastic toys, cartoons, advertisements, architectural motifs, art historical images, screenshots, and more. Using 3D printing and traditional casting techniques, he transforms these items into abstract, three-dimensional renderings. Scrubbed of their most recognizable attributes, Russo's sculptures are stripped down to formal qualities, like color, shape, and texture.

*Practiced Play* serves as an extension of Russo's collaboration-informed, inquiry-driven studio practice. The construction of the space calls for the viewer to become a hands-on collaborator in engaging and activating the objects that make up this new body of work. Centralized around a long table with varying heights and over a hundred foam, resin, and cement objects strewn on shelves throughout the gallery, visitors are asked to delve into a participatory process of play and investigation. *Practiced Play* invites its participants to notice how, with some tactile study, an object's history may become evident in its form. Objects that seem unidentifiable can be handled intuitively. Combinations, arrangements, and collaborations expand the perceived limits of engagement and give rise to a childlike sense of curiosity.

**A virtual artist talk will be presented on Thursday, May 25, 6–7pm. Link to register [here](#).** Visit Hamiltonian Artists' [website](#) and follow [@hamiltonian\\_artists](#) on Instagram for more information about corresponding public programs; details to be announced.

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

**Matthew Russo** (b. Worcester, MA; lives and works in Washington, DC) earned his BFA in Painting from Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts, Old Lyme, CT, and his MFA from American University, Washington, DC. As part of his art education, he studied in Prato, Italy, where he focused on traditional forms of painting and printmaking. His work actualizes theoretical research into sculpture, painting, and drawing. He uses abstraction as a language to dissect the relationships between objects and materials and their roles in gender, consumerism, class, and personal history. Russo has exhibited his work at Dodomu Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, and But, Also, Washington, DC. Russo is a 2021–2023 Hamiltonian Artists Fellow.



### ABOUT HAMILTONIAN ARTISTS

Hamiltonian Artists' mission is to build a dynamic community of innovative artists and effective visual art leaders by providing professional development opportunities to early-career artists and by advancing their entrepreneurial success. In 2007, Paul So, an avid painter and a physics professor at George Mason University, founded Hamiltonian Artists and Hamiltonian Gallery with the vision of creating an innovative career incubator program for emerging visual artists. In 2019, the Board of Directors of Hamiltonian Artists chose to merge the two organizations into a single 501c3 nonprofit to better serve the mission.

Today, Hamiltonian Artists is a dynamic catalyst for DC's creative economy and a vibrant center for contemporary art in Washington, DC. Through its unique investment into the next generation of cutting-edge artists, Hamiltonian helps artists to develop important business skills, professional experiences, and visibility to support and sustain their art career. Through a two-year artist fellowship, artist talks, public events and its membership program, the organization contributes to the vitality of DC's burgeoning arts scene by deepening the appreciation for contemporary art and culture throughout Washington, DC, and beyond.

### VISIT US

The exhibition is on view at Hamiltonian Artists, 1353 U Street NW, Washington, DC 20009. Gallery hours: Thursday–Saturday, 11–6pm. For more information visit [hamiltonianartists.org](http://hamiltonianartists.org).

### CONTACT

For press inquiries and additional info, contact Anisa Olufemi, Fellowship Manager: [anisa@hamiltonianartists.org](mailto:anisa@hamiltonianartists.org).