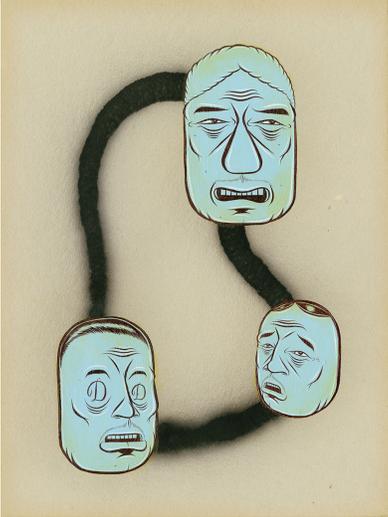


PRESS RELEASE

Barry McGee

Opens Thursday January 4 from 6–8 pm
Exhibition continues through February 17, 2018



Cheim & Read is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by Barry McGee, which will open on January 4, 2018, and run through February 17, accompanied by a catalogue with essay by Katya Tylevich. This is the artist's second show with the gallery.

Barry McGee is an artist who takes uncertainty and unpredictability as his guiding principles. Every exhibition is different. He arranges paintings, drawings, sculptures, found objects, and works by other artists into freely improvised installations that roam across the walls, floors, and ceilings of an exhibition space. In the past, his installations have featured everything from robotic graffiti writers to entire shipping containers and automobiles.

For his new show at Cheim & Read, McGee has assembled hundreds of artworks and objects into an installation that is at once boisterous and fluid. The gallery's compact "dome room," facing the entrance foyer, is outfitted with shelves and pedestals holding dozens of painted ceramics, including a totem-like stack of vessels

covered in geometric patterns. Paintings on scrap wood, cardboard, and canvas hang on the walls or sit on the floor, while a spray-painted banner, reading "Do Your Part for the Resistance," and an enormous black-and-white photograph dominate the upper portions of the space.

The walls of the front section of the main gallery are covered with paintings featuring optical patterns, geometric shapes, and stylized heads, along with the occasional acronym — "THR" ("The Human Race" or "The Harsh Reality") and "DFW" ("Down for Whatever"). One corner of the space is occupied by a small, self-enclosed room (designated the "L. Fong Healing Arts Center," an allusion to one of McGee's pseudonyms), which the artist built to house a floor-to-ceiling installation of artworks and videos by his friends and acquaintances. Nearby, three vitrines are filled with magazines, chapbooks, drawings, and hand-painted bottles and artifacts by the artist and others.

The rear gallery of the main space is dominated by more than eighty wooden surf boards stacked against the east wall until they touch the ceiling, where they seem to join with the skylight and the apartment tower looming above. The opposite wall bellies outward as if struck by an earthquake. Here McGee has installed a tight-fitting cluster of black-framed drawings and watercolors that becomes its own overall shape, contrasting with a similarly tight cluster of unframed paintings hanging on the wall to the right. Recurring motifs ricochet around the entire gallery space, tying together the disparate forms and materials into a buzzing, dynamic whole.

A native of San Francisco, McGee studied painting and printmaking at the San Francisco Art Institute, graduating in 1991. He became a leading figure in the 1990s movement known as the Mission School, after the city's celebrated Mission District. He has shown extensively, both nationally and internationally, with solo exhibitions at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, Texas; the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Fondazione Prada, Milan; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the Rose Art Museum, Waltham, Massachusetts; the Butler Gallery, Kilkenny Castle, Ireland; the Watari Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; and the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, England, among others. McGee's work was included in the 2001 Venice Biennale, the 2008 Carnegie International, and the 2009–2010 Biennale de Lyon, France. His retrospective opened in 2012 at the Berkeley Art Museum, Berkeley, California, and traveled to the Institute of Contemporary Art Boston, Boston, Massachusetts.

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