



Keegan McHargue, Oblivion II, mixed media on paper, 2011

"I'll try anything twice."

SAN FRANCISCO, CA.

"Natural", Keegan Mchargue's debut exhibition at Frey Norris, demonstrates his flexibility in transcending the limitations of new materials and synthesizing wide ranging ideas. The several dozen paintings, works on paper and two sculptures in "Natural" reflect an eclectic adventure, imagery springing from the artist's diverse interests and varied investigations. Everything from pop and punk music to snippets of art history (Cezanne, Gauguin, Matisse and Picasso all exert themselves in sublimated ways) to McHargue's interest in design and branding, to more emotional and personal subject

MEDIA ALERT:

Keegan McHargue

Natural

September 10 – October 29, 2011

Gallery Reception:

Saturday, September 10, 4:00 to 7:00 pm
Frey Norris Contemporary & Modern,
161 Jessie St. (at New Montgomery)
San Francisco, CA 94105

- McHargue's return exhibition to Bay Area Art Scene.
- Approximately 7 new canvases, 2 new assemblage sculptures and 20 new works on paper, colorful, humorous and confounding.
- Recent solo exhibitions with Emmanuel Perrotin, Paris, Jack Hanley, San Francisco, Hiromi Yoshii, Tokyo and Metro Pictures, New York.
- McHargue's new works expand on his "Notions," a visual analogue of loose musical notation, with resemblance to the eclecticism of jazz.
- Omnivorous syncretic approach to art-making distinguishes McHargue from artists with narrow proscriptive methodologies or those producing single concept driven exhibition

matter; the artist pulls his inspiration from all corners of culture with no real adherence to a hierarchy when it comes to image making. A toilet, a cartoon figure, abstract pattern or imagery from a magazine advertisement may carry similar weight to nuanced ideas by intellectual heavyweights like Walter Benjamin, Edward Bernays or Dave Hickey.

After years of focus on concept-driven shows, Mchargue has ultimately returned to his long held love of surface, playing with a 21st century reinvention of Romanticism. Humor remains, sometimes through his happy timeless characters, the Foibles. His art, which has always manipulated scale and repetition, now appears more abstract, the visual analogue of a concrete kind of poetry, jazz-like exercises in improvisation, each gesture inter-related to most others. Portions of other works may be scaled up or down and reappear in a new piece, creating fresh re-workings, reinventions of familiar themes. An interest in immediate satisfaction manifests through the collision of high formalism and a kind of loose, irreverent disregard for convention.

Self-taught McHargue has shown in recent years at galleries in New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Vienna and Tokyo. His writing and interviews have appeared in *The Believer* and *Beautiful Decay* and his art resides in the permanent collections of MoMA, SFMoMA and the Judith Rothschild Foundation, among others.

This exhibition is accompanied by a 20 page catalogue with essay by Matt Gonzalez and a response to McHargue's work in poetry by Dale Pendell. Matt Gonzalez is a collage artist, lawyer, and politician living in San Francisco. Poet Dale Pendell is the author of *Pharmako/Gnosis: Plant Teachers and the Poison Path*, *The Great Bay: Chronicles of the Collapse*, and other books.

For additional information and images please contact the gallery (415) 346-7812 or email melissa@freynorris.com