



Chivas Clem - cumwizard69420 - Jon Pylypchuk

American Rituals
May 30 - July 20

This group show is about the myths of the American dream, but also more broadly about how dreaming intersects with horror and the myth in both the reality of lived American experience, and the rich fantasy which can be found in the internet cosmos.

Alice Neel once said: « I love to paint people who have been torn to shreds by the rat race in NY».

These three artists from different generations show the evolution of the state of the American condition, as seen thru the document of the decline of the cowboy, narratives about the detritus of the fast food generation, and the perverse hellscape of internet celebrity.

« While working on the songs late into the night and eating McDonald's hamburgers I saved the bags as a memento of this time. I Made the last ghosts for Tony (a dear close friend) out of the McDonald's bags that would otherwise have been discarded. These are three of them. «

Pylypchuk continues to use his sculptures as a way to explore the frailty of human existence and social relationships. Through anthropomorphism, he creates characters that seem inexplicably lost, wounded, or fragile. The combination of cynicism, anger and melancholy imbue his installations and sculpture with both humor and existential sadness.

The painting « Welcome to America, Fuck Faces, 2007 “ which is about immigration brings both a self-deprecating tone that is both satirical and ironic. Built using a bricolage of scrappy materials, the painting feels like a brutal query about our sympathy for those searching for freedom. Why come to this hellhole?

Cumwizard is an outsider artist-self-taught but surprisingly sophisticated in both subject and execution. Drawing from the media multiverse of TV shows, movies, and the internet, Cumwizard casts a penetrating eye on the inflated egos of celebrity-obsessed culture and the scoundrel celebrities that populate his withering hellscape. And yet these images, which are often unnerving and frequently grotesque, are also noteworthy for being allegories of human frailty.

130 years ago, an artist plagued with such pure uncompromising vision of the world would be shunned by society and put away in an insane asylum. Today thanks to the internet, we can experience the fire of artistic creation live as it is happening on instagram: Cumwizard is the living dark poet: sincere about the counterfeit, and always ready to depict a bracing neurosis.

Chivas Clem practice started to focus on documenting his relationship with a group of so-called "rednecks" who he discovered by accident in a kind of flophouse/used bookstore near his studio. They are drifters, addicts, and felons- mostly the sons and grandsons of farmers and local cowboys and country folk. This subculture has obvious connections to the myths of the rugged masculinity of the "cowboy"(captured by the likes of Richard Avedon, Larry Clark, Danny Lyons), but these men are neither mythic or romanticized. These outsiders are marked by a kind of macho camouflage but underneath appear fragile and fraught with ambivalence and homoeroticism. These pictures offer a kind of glimpse of this armor breaking into a million little pieces from the weight of its own hubris.