

Duke Riley & Frohawk Two Feathers: Based on a True Story

October 10, 2014 through March 22, 2015

Curated by Steven Matijcio

ARTIST(S) Duke Riley, Frohawk Two Feathers

History's once unquestionable integrity has eroded over time, with as much fiction, interpretation and imagination revealed in the pages of our esteemed libraries as actual facts and events. The volumes written, disseminated and institutionalized by presiding political entities are now compromised by a swelling number of alternative histories – giving voice to minorities, migrants and those formerly on the losing end of landmark battles. In this expanded, if no less tangled forum there now live as many versions and renditions as there are subjects to voice them.

Twisting fact, fantasy and fabrication into an outsider's view of western civilization, this exhibition brings together two artists who have turned historical fiction into a habitual calling. Boston-born Duke Riley makes art for, from and with those who linger on the periphery: marrying what he calls "populist myth" and "reinvented historical obscurities" with field research, participatory craft and museological display. With DIY means and dirty fingernails his artifact-driven assemblages assert the tattered legacies of micro kingdoms, hobo paradises and aquatic crusades.

Chicago-born, Los Angeles-based Frohawk Two Feathers is an artist, historian, and self-described "myth-maker" who re-imagines 18th century colonial history through a fictive cast of slaves, revolutionaries, militiamen and aristocrats. On flags, parchment and otherwise invented heirlooms he fuses historical portraiture, indigenous traditions and folk art with hip hop culture, role playing and rebel fantasy. Together, these artists cast outlandish, irreverent and ultimately insightful visions of the way the world was made.