

NIGHT GALLERY

2276 E. 16th Street, Los Angeles, California 90021

nightgallery.ca

ROBERT NAVA

Bloodsport

February 19 – March 26, 2022

Night Gallery is thrilled to announce *Bloodsport*, a solo exhibition by Robert Nava. This is the artist's second solo presentation with the gallery, following *Vs* in 2019.

In an exhibition dedicated to works on paper, the artist answers the formal challenge of working in a broad range of scales and activates the spontaneity permitted by the materiality of the surface. Nava's tableaux originate in a lifelong drawing practice that remains essential to the development of his visual vocabulary; the compulsive, near-constant act of drawing allows for intuitive gestures and interplays between materials to emerge without constraint. There is a common sense of freedom in the making and viewing of *Bloodsport*: unexpected interactions between acrylic, oil stick, and grease pencil upon the paper underscore the joyful experimentation that marks Nava's distinctive style.

Bloodsport locates itself in expansive landscapes: starlit skies, mountain ranges, and bodies of water. Playful and energized, the pieces are unified by an open-ended narrative structure as four-legged sharks, fire-breathing tigers, and winged rabbits navigate one another and their own hybridized bodies, providing a portal into the alternate realm they inhabit. One finds influences of historical painting within Nava's compositions, whether epic scenes of conflict or dramatic chance encounters.

In collective dialogue and individually, the works on view charge into the unknown with tenacity. We can understand the exchanges taking place between material and surface as visual manifestations of the dualities Nava explores: tension and harmony, balance and unpredictability, instinct and intention. Throughout the exhibition, seemingly oppositional energies meet in a convivial atmosphere as Nava's singular take on figuration continues to surprise and charm. Such a *carte blanche* approach embodies the curiosity and indetermination Nava finds thrilling about art, and *Bloodsport* accordingly coalesces around a spirit of adventure. *Bloodsport* is exuberance on paper.

Robert Nava (b. East Chicago, IN) has had solo exhibitions at Night Gallery, Los Angeles; PACE Gallery, Palm Beach & East Hampton; Vito Schnabel Gallery, New York; and Sorry We're Closed Gallery, Brussels. His work has been included in group exhibitions at Various Small Fires, Seoul; Ruttkowski 68, Paris; Jeffrey Deitch, Los Angeles; Wayne State University, Detroit; and Safe Gallery, Brooklyn. Nava has been the subject of profiles in publications including *artnet News*, *Art & Object*, *GQ*, *LA Weekly*, and *Cultured*. His work belongs in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago; Institute for Contemporary Art, Miami; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; and Zuzeum Art Centre, Riga. Nava lives and works in Brooklyn.