

MOTHER

KADAR BROCK | LEE HUNTER

Belief in a Disenchanted World

October 8 - December 10, 2022

Opening October 8, 4 - 6 pm

Mother is pleased to present *Belief in a Disenchanted World*, a two-person exhibition featuring paintings by Kadar Brock and sculptures by Lee Hunter. This is the first time that Brock and Hunter have exhibited together. *Belief in a Disenchanted World* runs from October 8 through December 10, 2022. Mother | Beacon is located on the ground floor of 1154 North Avenue, Beacon, NY.

The exhibition's title refers to Dutch philosophy professor Wouter Hanegraaff's essay "How Magic Survived the Disenchantment of the World." Hanegraaff describes the tension between a participatory or magical worldview and a secularly rational, disenchanted worldview, and how the latter denies the innate human need for the former. He writes: "...not only does the feeling of participation explain the continuous attraction of magic in a disenchanted world—the experience of disenchantment actually causes an emotional need to reaffirm participation."¹ The works of Brock and Hunter, while products of this disenchanted world, remain hopeful—they find magic within art-making.

Within his art practice, Kadar Brock creates contemplative spaces, finding spiritual purpose within a secular, mundane existence. Brock's process is lengthy, delicate, and tedious: he mines ephemera found while researching the New Age cult that informed his earliest beliefs—The Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness—for images to process, then performs rituals of projection and release in the studio. He un-stretches and scrapes down his representational paintings of said images, coats the ground in primer-sealer, then sands the surface down to create textural, chalky tangibility. Brock then engulfs the broken new ground with another image in oil paint. He repeats this cycle until the many layers of painting and erasure grow unified—balancing cracks and chaotic holes that accentuate process. In *soul flight, can make you feel good, and that's always right, with the flick of a switch, comes from high* (2022), the work at once

¹ Wouter J. Hanegraaff, "How magic survived the disenchantment of the world," *Religion*, Volume 33, Issue 4, 2003, Pages 357-380.

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evokes a wintery scene, a well-worn rag, and a palpable expanse of both color and the lack thereof. Continually tearing down what has been built, Brock's paintings cannot be created without loss, and that loss—or release—prompts transformation.

For *Belief in a Disenchanted World*, Lee Hunter presents a selection of alabaster sculptures from their ongoing project, "Cosmogenesis"—a multimedia worlding project that takes the form of an archive. The project is told from the perspective of an archivist from the 2100s who is cataloging and interpreting artifacts. These sculptures come from the Temple of Light, a transdimensional travel cult that uses esoteric methods to travel the quantum field searching for portals to access parallel dimensions. The sculptures are ritual objects that were kept in a sacred collection at the Temple. *Dragon Key; Thought to Open Portal Near Santa Fe; Found in Cas O'Brien's personal items; E00032*, is a small, milky-orange sculpture. At first glance the sculpture looks familiar to the 21st-century human eye, but slowly grows indistinct the longer one attempts to place it. The work's title and background information accentuate this spiral of uncertainty, creating tangible, new pieces from a pre-existing reality.

A vehement dissent from and reclaiming of Max Weber's 19th-century assertion that the world has grown disenchanted. The works of both Brock and Hunter, while philosophical and obscure, retain the accessible, purely human need for belief, magic, and participation. Together, Brock's spiritual, anti-religious paintings and Hunter's future-historied religio-objects build a ladder both horizontal and vertical—linking our earthly realm to the magical—however one may choose to define it.

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Kadar Brock (b. 1980 New York, New York) is a painter focused on the commitment to ritual. Often working on multiple canvases at once, Brock creates dynamic, vibrant abstractions that are born from an arduous process of painting, scraping, priming, sanding, and painting again. Retaining a commitment to his established process, Brock layers paintings about personal memory, family history, and iconographies of New Age religion. The physical and emotional process of creation, often taking place over many years, enables a reverse archaeology of the self and renders a delicate balance between body, memory, and psychology. Brock has exhibited both within the United States and internationally, with solo shows at Vigo Gallery (London, UK), Patron Gallery (Chicago, IL) Gallery Diet (Miami, FL), Thierry Goldberg (New York, NY), Almine Rech (Brussels, Belgium), and The Hole (New York, NY). Group shows include those at Praz-Delavallade (Paris, France); Brand New Gallery (Milan, Italy), Saamlung (Hong Kong), Horton Gallery (Berlin, Germany), and Sperone Westwater (New York, NY). Brock earned a BFA from the Cooper Union School of Art. He lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Lee Hunter (b. 1978 Charleston, South Carolina) is a visual artist focused on the human relationship to nature; or how humans think about nature. Since 2015, they have been working on a durational worlding project called Cosmogenesis that includes photos, videos, sculptures, textiles, found objects, and writing. Hunter is interested in how people know what they know and learning about how belief systems are formed. They do this by talking to people, spending time in archives, and reading broadly across many academic fields. Hunter's work has been exhibited at John Michael Kohler Art Center (Sheboygan, WI), The Luminary (St. Louis, MO), Vox Populi (Philadelphia, PA), Berkeley Art Center (Berkeley, CA), and Museum of Contemporary Art (North Miami, FL). They have been an artist in residence at Illinois State University (Bloomington, IL) Palazzo Monti (Brescia, Italy), ACRE (Wisconsin), I-Park Foundation (East Haddam, CT), and Vermont Studio Center (Johnson, VT). Hunter earned a BS in Arts & Letters from Portland State University and an MFA in New Genres from the San Francisco Art Institute. Hunter lives and works in Champaign, IL.