

Adams and Ollman

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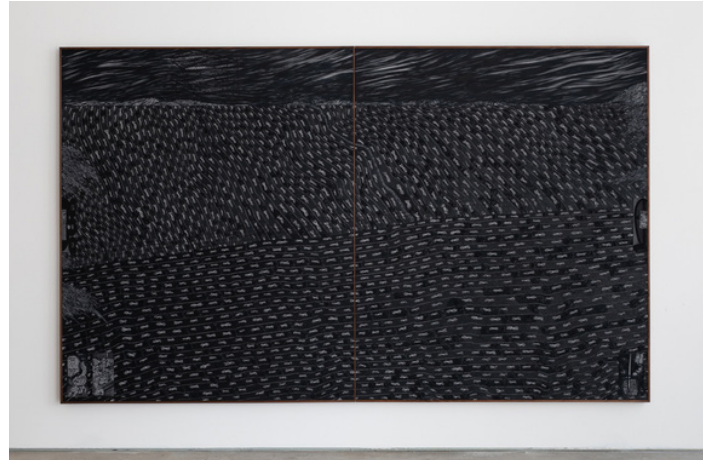
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EMMA CC COOK: *DIBBLER STICK*
JAMES CASTLE: SELECT WORKS
APRIL 8–MAY 6, 2023
OPENING RECEPTION: SATURDAY, APRIL 8
FROM 1–4PM

Adams and Ollman is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new paintings and sculptures by Emma cc Cook with a selection of historical works on paper by self-taught artist James Castle. The rural American West has long been a subject of artistic exploration and site of cultural production, reflecting broad discourses surrounding identity, history, environment, and erasure. Both Cook and Castle depict this charged landscape from different time periods and vantage points, revealing striking parallels and marked distinctions. This special exhibition will be on view at the gallery April 8 through May 6, 2023.

For *Dibbler Stick*, Cook approaches her subject via robust world-building. Central to the presentation is a large cinematic painting, *The wonderful company, Pittsburg, CA, 94565*, that reveals an eerily beautiful cascade of indistinct crops—hypnotic, oppressive, and void of humans or habitation—that stretches as far as the eye can see. In dialogue with the painting are sculptural works made from solid walnut that resemble farm implements or tools, but are rendered as smooth, aesthetic abstractions that reference mid-century design. Toggling between the past and present, the familiar and the unknown, beauty and dread, absurd and banal, Cook's works call to mind Americana and craft traditions, as well as the polymorphous sculptures of H.C. Westermann. Other smaller paintings incorporate the aesthetic of narrative modalities like film and novels,



drawing attention to the ways in which individual and collective memory collide to shape history and geography, and ultimately, the present.

Inspired by scientific agricultural analyses and innovations that would develop throughout the early to mid-20th century and have reaching effects on both the landscape and sociocultural norms, Cook's theatrical presentation draws attention to the cross-pollination of the domestic and the industrial, the cultural and the scientific, the aesthetic and the functional. She shows us that the gimmickry of form belies its use, and vice versa, while authority, in the form of scientific studies, capital investment, and the continued impact of Manifest Destiny, marshals the ambiguity of form and value to its own ends.

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Born profoundly deaf and believed never to have learned to read, write, or sign, James Castle spent his lifetime making art on his family's farms in Garden Valley, Idaho. Creating sophisticated drawings, books, and sculptures from humble materials such as discarded envelopes, matchboxes, twine, and soot, Castle produced a complex body of work that is not only deeply personal, as it intimately documents the artist's life and surroundings, but also provides the viewer with a fascinating glimpse into rural American life and landscape of the last century. A selection of landscapes, farm scenes, and political cartoons drawn with soot and spit will be on view.

Emma cc Cook (b. 1989, Minneapolis, MN; lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) graduated with a BFA in painting from University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, and studied at the Angel Academy in Florence, Italy. Select residencies include New York School of the Arts at Vytacil, NY and Campos de Gutierrez in Medellin, Colombia. Cook is a recipient of the MSAB grant, the Carter Prize in Painting and the Gay M. Grossman Memorial Scholarship.

James Castle (b. 1899, Garden Valley, ID—d. 1977, Boise, ID) has been the subject of solo exhibitions at The Drawing Center, New York, NY; Boise Art Museum, Boise, ID; The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin, Ireland; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; and the Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota, MN. James Castle: A Retrospective, a major survey of Castle's work, was organized by the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA and traveled to the Art Institute of Chicago, IL and the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, University of California, Berkeley, CA. Castle's work is included in major museum collections throughout the U.S., including the American Folk Art Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the High Museum in Atlanta, Georgia, the Boise Art Museum, and the Art Institute of Chicago.

Above:

Emma cc Cook, *The wonderful company*, Pittsburg, CA, 94565, oil, acrylic, upholstery, walnut, 84 x 140 x 2 inches.

James Castle, *Untitled*, n.d., soot and saliva on found paper, 6 3/8h x 8 7/8w inches.