

HALSEY MCKAY GALLERY

HEDGE - DAVID KENNEDY CUTLER & MONSIEUR ZOHORE
August 5 – 30, 2023 | 79 Newtown Lane, East Hampton, NY
For further information please contact info@halseymckay.com



Halsey McKay Gallery is pleased to announce *Hedge*, a dialogical exhibition showing new multimedia bodies of work by David Kennedy Cutler and Monsieur Zohore. The artists' connection began in 2018 when Zohore, then a graduate student, reached out to Cutler regarding his durational exhibition/performance *Off Season* (Halsey McKay). They have been virtual correspondents ever since, admiring each other's work from afar. Using inkjet printing and digital imagery, both artists agitate whatever medium they choose to subvert: painting, sculpture, photography or performance. First time collaborators, their intellectual and material practice has been intuitively tethered. The exhibition is a physical manifestation of their telepathic call and response over the years.

Hedge is an investigation into materials and motifs that have appeared time and again in Zohore and Cutler's work, and are now grafted into the exhibition's landscape of the Hamptons. Robes, cages, walls, containers, trellises, barriers, vases, and windows are some of the analogous symbols that field the multiple meanings of the word "hedge." Abundantly verdant and knowingly evasive, their works contrast interior and exterior space with notions of exclusion and acceptance. Aware of the complex social strata of the site of their exhibition, the iconography in their works become playful allegories of demarcation and separation, public and private, beauty and shame.

Zohore's works are best described as visual essays, queer objects that disregard geometry and disobey conventional categorization. Some appearing on walls while others are sculptures and installations, his works draw attention to the poetics of relations between desires of wealth and violence. To create his works, made mostly of Bounty Paper Towels, inkjet and bleach, the artist begins by creating a digital collage consisting mostly of recognizable images of pop culture, art history and urban landscapes. Breaking these images up into equal size rectangles, he prints each rectangle onto a single sheet of paper towel. Cutting and tiling them onto the canvas, he uses bleach in a process that mimics gestures found in action painting to remove layers to colors, revealing texture and adding a dreamlike aesthetic to the constructed reality.

Mining the most immediate and intimate objects found in domestic materiality, Cutler continues to build his investigations into the ephemeral tumult of living and working. Beginning with a process of inkjet transfer on canvas, he then collages and paints over his imagery, fashioning paintings and sculptures that collapse boundaries between the body and objects that surround, nourish and shelter it. His repetitive motifs of rib cages, trellises, vessels, cleaning products, plants, flowers, food, clothing, shipping crates, tools and domestic furniture weave throughout his disobedient surfaces, undermining the substrates that physically support the work. His objects, defying photographic practice or studied still life, are frozen moments of the precise breaking point where leaves lap the surfaces of canvases and twigs, chairs, and flowers tear the seams of their containers. His work, like Zohore's, nods to class-based labor, while projecting a speculative realm untethered to conventional material reality.

Complementing the wall works, the artists will present flower arrangements in vessels. Cutler's flowers, like the rest of his materials, are synthetic and viral, rupturing from large zipper-clad canvas wine bottles, conjuring personified husks. Zohore's *Primitivims*, 2015–ongoing, a bird of paradise flower placed intentionally and neatly in an open container of blue Windex. The exotic beauty of the flowers, however, quickly transforms into a tragic drama as they continue to suck up the detergent and slowly turn blue. If Cutler's flowers are a water leak eventually breaking the ceiling at your dinner party, Zohore's are the young polite cousin no one suspects is slowly drinking all the Martinis.

- Text by Yomna Osman

David Kennedy Cutler (b. 1979, Sandgate, VT) is an artist, writer and performer who lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. His practice addresses traces of domesticity; he presents material objects as witnesses of unseen labor and hidden objects. He observes, transfers, and transforms recognizable every day and artistic materials to create installations, paintings, and performances.

Cutler received his BFA from The Rhode Island School of Design in 2001. He has had solo exhibitions at Derek Eller Gallery (NYC), Halsey McKay Gallery (East Hampton, NY), Essex Flowers (NYC), The Centre for Contemporary Art (Tallinn, Estonia) and Nice & Fit (Berlin, Germany). Cutler has performed in various spaces in New York including Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery, Essex Flowers, Printed Matter, Halsey McKay, Derek Eller Gallery, and Flag Art Foundation, and internationally at the Center for Contemporary Arts Estonia, among others. His works are included in the permanent collections of the Wellin Museum at Hamilton College and The RISD Museum, and his artist's books are included in the libraries of the Whitney Museum and the Brooklyn Museum. He has been reviewed and featured in *The New York Times*, *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *The New Yorker* and *Modern Painter*, among others. Cutler is represented by Derek Eller Gallery, NY and Halsey McKay Gallery, East Hampton.

Monsieur Zohore's (b. 1993, Potomac, MD) practice in the consumption and digestion of culture through the conflation of domestic quotidian labor and art production. Through performance, video, installation, and sculpture, his practices explore queer history alongside his Ivorian-American heritage through a multi-faceted lens of humor, economics, art history, and labor.

Zohore received an MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2020 and a BFA from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York in 2015. He will present *Get Well Soon*, his 5th solo exhibition to date at Magenta Plains in the spring of 2024 with whom he participated in the Dallas Art Fair in 2023. Zohore has exhibited his works at venues such as The Phillips Collection (D.C), Spazio Amanita (Florence), Jule Collins Smith Museum (Auburn), Art021(Shanghai), Paris Intternatale (Paris), Art Athina (Athens), Sculpture Center (New York), The Clarrington Art Center (Canada), Pace (New York), Spurs (Beijing), Tick Tack (Belgium), The Baker Museum (Florida), Socrates Sculpture Park (New York), The Baltimore Museum of Art (Baltimore), Von Ammon Co (D.C.), The Washington Project for the Arts (D.C), and The Columbus Museum (Ohio). His work is in the collections of the The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, in Washington, DC; Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; The Bunker Collection, West Palm Beach, FL; Brookfield Collection, New York, NY; The Roux Collection Panama; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA (promised gift) and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN (promised gift). Zohore lives and works in Richmond, VA, New York, NY, and Abidjan, CIV, and is the Assistant Professor of Painting and Printmaking at Virginia Commonwealth University.