

Robert Mapplethorpe

Animism, Faith, Violence, and Conquest

Curated by Jacolby Satterwhite

February 24 - March 23, 2024

Morán Morán is pleased to announce *Animism, Faith, Violence, and Conquest*, an exhibition of Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs curated by Jacolby Satterwhite. *Animism, Faith, Violence, and Conquest* aims to bridge the temporal gap between primal imagery and contemporary experience, reflecting on how themes of animism, faith, sex, death, violence, and conquest have perpetually shaped our social structures and individual psyches. Mapplethorpe's images act as a visual diary, documenting the cyclical nature of human existence and the omnipresence of animism within this cycle. The photographs, featuring subjects interacting with objects symbolic of power, survival, and transcendence, serve as metaphors. By curating a selection of photographs that thoughtfully pair human subjects with symbols of power and faith, ranging from weaponry and religious iconography to machinery and animals, this exhibition is a meditation on the nature of life and the role of animism in understanding our experience.

Each photograph is a testament to the dynamic interplay of objects and beings, underscoring the belief that everything in the universe possesses a spiritual essence. Mapplethorpe's work, known for its complex symbolism, captures the raw beauty and power of its subjects. This exhibition examines philosophical questions and assumptions about social evolution and the roles that faith, power, sexuality, and technology play in shaping human societies. The work also considers the complex interplay of spirituality and sexuality within the matrix of social and individual identity, seeking to explore the ways in which these themes have served both as a means of empowerment and as tools of conquest. Examining these images through a lens of animism shines light on where faith intersects with identity, and sexuality converges with power. *Animism, Faith, Violence, and Conquest* acknowledges the complexities of our existence and recognizes the duality of divine and darkness in all aspects of humanity.