Jim Shaw presents new paintings in his exhibition "*I Only Wanted You to Love Me*" at Metro Pictures. One of the most influential artists of his generation, Shaw ardently researches a vast spectrum of subjects - from comic books he has accumulated since childhood to mythology and dizzyingly incorporates them into his drawings, paintings, sculpture and videos. These latest works, done on sections of old theater backdrops, include elements from Disney, Richard Wagner's *Ring Cycle*, Jimi Hendrix cover art and his dreams to talk about subjects such as workaholism, the biochemical industry and 19th Century monopoly capitalism. Drawing from da Vinci's Deluge drawings, Shaw's painting *The Deluge* depicts an arm extending from a crashing wave and from this "hand of God," as Shaw refers to it, an enraptured Eva Marie Saint and heroic-looking Cary Grant emerge. With a tugboat from the original backdrop left in the background, Grant's hand rests on an oversize nose carved into the rock of Mt. Rushmore.

The elision of everyday and mythological realities and allegories has been emblematic of Shaw's work for more than thirty years. He has elaborately developed characters and narratives that draw on America's history and culture, its products and artifacts, to make three extensive bodies of work. *My Mirage* tells the story of Billy, a blond-haired, blue-eyed suburban youth born in the 1950s who delves into a world of psychedelia during his college years and, after a bad acid trip, joins a pagan sect before finally becoming a Christian Fundamentalist. Shaw's intricate pseudo-religion Oism closely resembles Mormonism and other homespun American religions. Founded by a virgin named O who gives birth to herself, Oism is replete with its own history, objects of worship and ritual. In the ongoing *Dream Drawings* and *Dream Objects* series of drawings, paintings and sculpture, Shaw draws on his subconscious to plot out the narratives of his dreams and make sur- real objects.

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