

*“Corruption Feeds”* is Will Benedict’s largest and most ambitious exhibition to date. It demonstrates the full breadth of his practice as an artist, curator and, most recently, filmmaker.

Benedict was invited by Bergen Kunsthall to make a solo exhibition in the institution’s main galleries. Expanding on his established practice of exhibition making, Benedict responded to the invitation by creating a show that includes a group of his own new works, a number of which he has produced collaboratively, as well as works by other artists. The exhibition also premieres a major new video work, commissioned by Bergen Kunsthall and made by Benedict in collaboration with the artist and journalist David Leonard.

The exhibition’s format continues a recent strand of curatorial work in which Benedict has created expansive, multi-layered displays of other artist’s work as an integrated part of his own artistic practice. Following on from his recent curatorial work on the exhibitions *“Commercial Psycho”* (Andrew Kreps, 2012), *“Vertical Club”* (Bortolami, New York, 2013) and *“Nuclear War: What’s in it for you?”* (Wilma Gold, 2014), the exhibition at Bergen Kunsthall further develops ideas explored by Benedict over the last few years.

Across the various different aspects of the exhibition, Benedict addresses themes of global food production and distribution, capitalism and the market, as well as the economic, political and social issues associated with our voracious culture of consumption, production and trade. A number of works in the show draw on the media and marketing languages of the last three decades, revealing the symbiotic, or perhaps cannibalistic, relationship between contemporary art and commercial advertising — a space which Benedict’s work frequently inhabits and explores.

A central work in *“Corruption Feeds”* is the new video *Toilets not Temples* (2014) made in collaboration with David Leonard. The film is shot in various locations in France, Norway, India and the USA. It explores the transnational politics of food distribution through an idiosyncratic and sometimes chaotic mix of reportage, interviews, news stories and analysis. Featuring a talking dolphin, giant rats and human rain, the video builds a fragmented, absurd, and nightmarish narrative, employing a knowing formal idiom that exposes the staging and fictions of contemporary journalistic forms and the exaggerated, sometimes hysterical, visual tropes of the news media.

The “picture in the picture” has been a dominant motif in Benedict’s own works in recent years. A particular set of material and visual elements often recurs: paintings in gouache on canvas are mounted within larger panels of foam board where photographs (usually life-size studio portraits of people) are integrated as part of the final composition. These various components are in turn

mounted in bespoke glass and aluminium frames. A repertoire of such composite, multi-media pictures forms the core of Benedict's exhibitions. At Bergen Kunsthall he presents a new series of these works alongside a group of recent diptychs. He goes on to further expanded this vocabulary of 'framing' to incorporate the architecture of the space itself — subtly altering the galleries with a series of enigmatic interventions.

On the back of the Kunsthall building, Benedict has installed a new billboard poster work, produced specially for the show.

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