

## NOON Projects Presents

### **FLAHT EARTH FALLING WATER**

**By  
David Shull**

**June 21 – July 27,  
2024**

Opening: June 21, 2024  
6–9pm

NOON Projects is honored to present *FLAT EARTH FALLING WATER* by David Shull, the artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery. Through a series of ten charcoal drawings on sandpaper, Shull explores the human experience through a surrealistic lens, critiquing the gregarious optimism of the American West and the erosion of truth in contemporary society. Reinterpreting the iconic Stetson cowboy hat as a flat earth stage for the dramas of frontier-capitalism, Shull questions the influence of prescribed identities on self-reflection and empathy. Also included are three sculptures harkening the contributions of M.C. Escher, Frank Lloyd Wright and natural scientist Heinrich G. F. Schröder in a tongue-in-cheek narrative about perspective and hierarchy in a post-truth era.

David Shull's serial practice focuses on the deconstruction of sentimentalities as a means to a deeper understanding of the human experience. Mining the familiar, whether materially in the form of common art materials and found objects, or, intellectually, such as puns, figures of speech, common visual tropes, artistic references as well as the unconscious and subconscious, Shull's open-ended approach has the effect of unearthing new, incalculable results from the near margins. Treading a fine line between humor and deep emotion, Shull focuses a tenuous fragility into concrete forceful statements towards etherial conclusions around production, narrative and cultural critique.

For his second exhibition at NOON Projects, *FLHAT EARTH FALLING WATER*, David Shull combines charcoal drawings on sandpaper with sculptures made of stained plywood, steel, ceramics, and found objects in a surrealistic tongue-in-cheek narrative confronting the gregarious optimism of the American west, a contemporary erosion of truth, and a conflation of the concepts of perspective and identity. What began as an intuitive and playful visual exploration of the euphemism, "to wear many hats" coalesces into a sort-of magical realism that spins a loose yarn outlining the fears, triumphs, and failures inherent to early capitalism's self-made, boot-strap, shoot-first-ask-questions-later Frontier mentality.

What this body of work confronts is not what happens when a person reflects or wears a given identity, but rather, what happens when an identity starts wearing you? In other words, what happens when an identity prescribes the taking for granted of the ego and such contrarian thinking that all logic and understood forces of nature are thrown out the window, usurping self reflection and empathy.

*FLHAT EARTH FALLING WATER* is framed by ten drawings that muse a simplified cowboy hat as a flat earth stage where natural beauty, humorous dramas and tragedies play out an optimistic and, at times, perilous narrative. In 1865, John B. Stetson, a famous hat manufacturer from Philadelphia, introduced the "Boss of the Plains" hat delivering a classic icon to the identity of Americans migrating from the cities of the North-East to the rugged frontiers West. Shull's flattening of the cowboy hat transforms it from fashionable object to conceptual text that challenges the clichéd representations of heroic individualism we are used to.

Around the same time that Stetson created his archetypal hat, Schroeder, a German natural scientist published his "Schroder's Stairs," (Fig. 2) an optical illusion which is a two-dimensional drawing that can be perceived either as a drawing of a staircase leading from left to right downwards or the same staircase only turned upside-down, becoming a classic example of perspective reversal in the psychology of perception.

NOON Projects is a gallery in Chinatown, Los Angeles. Our program showcases artists who work from the heart, with a focus on queerness, the divine, the natural world, craft, and social practices. We host an ongoing program of dinners, concerts, meditation groups, and community happenings.

We aim to create a welcoming space for artists and the community to connect and flourish. Please come by and see us – you are very welcome here.

NOON Projects  
951 Chung King Road  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Thursday to Saturday  
Noon–6pm  
And by Appointment

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Schoeder greatly influenced MC Escher's impossible compositions which often conflated 2-D and 3-D space and included more than 2 points of gravity as seen in "Waterfall," 1961 (Fig. 1), and "Relativity" 1953 (Fig. 3). While perceptually confusing, Escher may have had something else in mind when creating his perspectively confounding works— as he once said jokingly, "The ego is always at the center of the universe."

While Shull was not aware of this statement by Escher before creating the works for his show, it cuts straight to the heart of what he is confronting with regards to perception and identity. Amidst a vast universe, some still seem to think that the moon is following them like a spotlight on a stage. While Galileo points at the stars, our inability to transcend the ego stares at his finger.

Two sculptures present in *FLHAT EARTH*, *Horizontal Staircase*, 2024, and *Reclining Staircase*, 2024, are monuments to the shift in perception so integral to Escher's work. Not optical illusions themselves, they lyrically harken to Schroeder and Escher while providing subtle commentary on hierarchy and the mental gymnastics required in our post-truth era.

Finally, in perhaps his most revealing work, Shull presents *Falling Water Threshold*, 2024—A simple wooden sculpture of a street gutter reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie-style of architecture, whose horizontal eaves and open floor plans captured the ethos of native rolling midwestern landscapes. Replacing what would be an iron grate is a geometrically carved ceramic in the style of Wright's late career concrete blocks used to construct homes such as the Hollyhock house in Los Angeles. Wright said in the *Realm of Ideas*, "what about the concrete block? It was the cheapest (and ugliest) thing in the building world. It lived mostly in the architectural gutter as an imitation of rock-faced stone. Why not see what could be done with that gutter rat?" In Shull's sculpture, we are the gutter. A portrait of humanity (and the artist!) as a threshold where information and influence rain down, filter by, and exit through a barrier between life above ground and the sewers below.



David Shull  
*FLHAT EARTH: A hole in the head between two vortexes, 2024*  
Vine charcoal on sandpaper  
28 x 40 in. | 71.1 x 101.6 cm  
31 x 43 in. | 78.7 x 109.2 cm (framed)



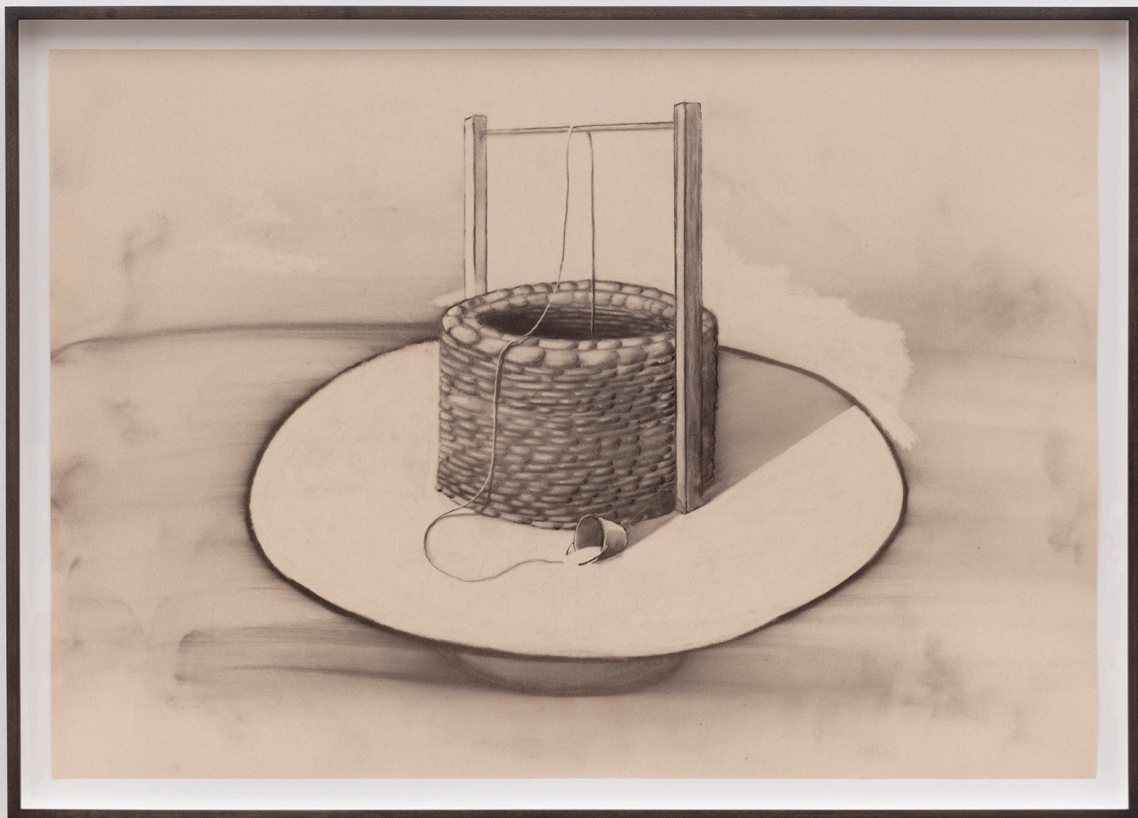


David Shull  
*FLHAT EARTH: Beacon*, 2023  
Vine charcoal on sandpaper  
28 x 40 in. | 71.1 x 101.6 cm  
31 x 43 in. | 78.7 x 109.2 cm (framed)



David Shull  
*FLHAT EARTH: Double Arnold*, 2023  
Vine charcoal on sandpaper  
28 x 40 in. | 71.1 x 101.6 cm  
31 x 43 in. | 78.7 x 109.2 cm (framed)





David Shull  
*FLHAT EARTH: Empty Empty*, 2023  
Vine charcoal on sandpaper  
28 x 40 in. | 71.1 x 101.6 cm  
31 x 43 in. | 78.7 x 109.2 cm (framed)





David Shull  
*FLHAT EARTH: Falling Water*, 2023  
Vine charcoal on sandpaper  
28 x 40 in. | 71.1 x 101.6 cm  
31 x 43 in. | 78.7 x 109.2 cm (framed)



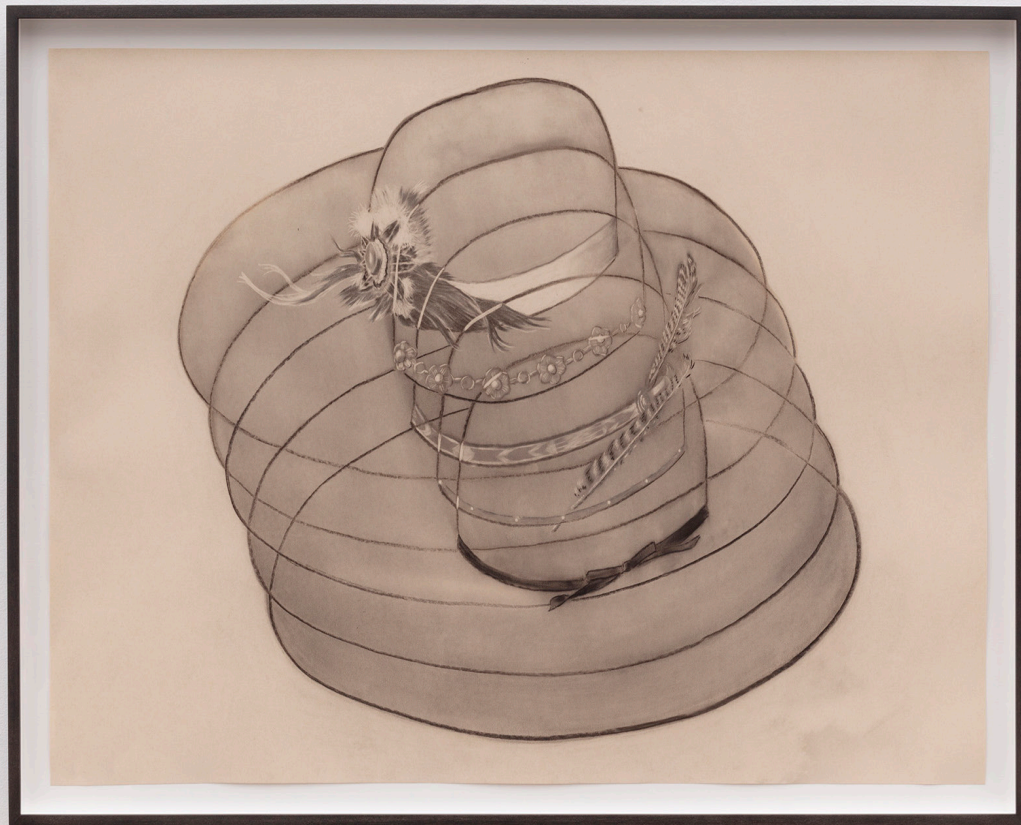


David Shull  
*FLHAT EARTH: Hapless Romantic*, 2023  
Vine charcoal on sandpaper  
28 x 40 in. | 71.1 x 101.6 cm  
31 x 43 in. | 78.7 x 109.2 cm (framed)



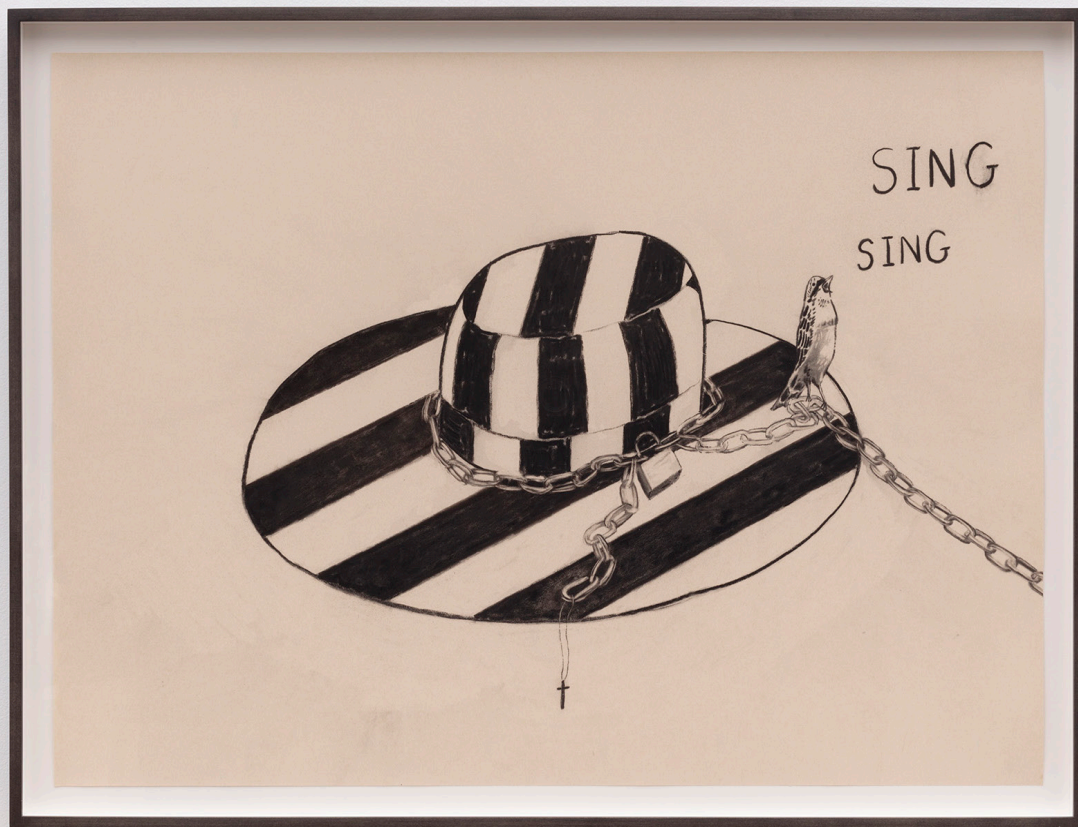


David Shull  
*FLHAT EARTH: Hapless Romantic*, 2023  
Vine charcoal on sandpaper  
28 x 40 in. | 71.1 x 101.6 cm  
31 x 43 in. | 78.7 x 109.2 cm (framed)

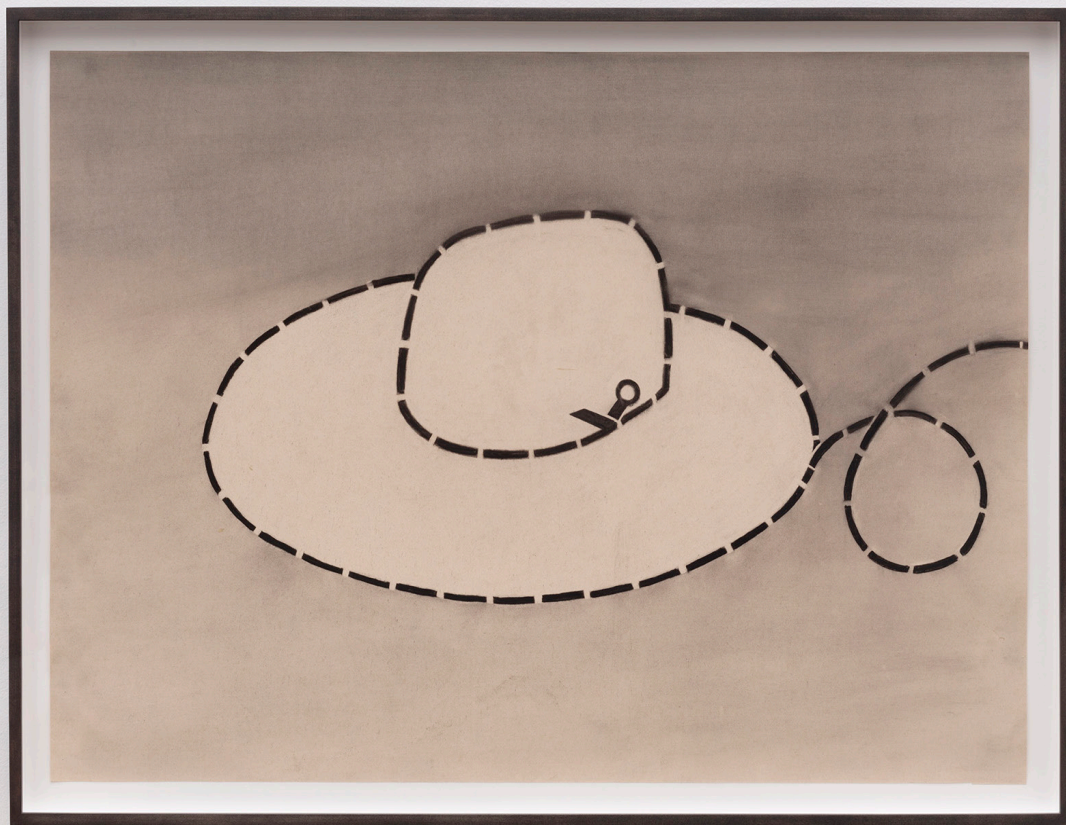


David Shull  
*FLHAT EARTH: Meta*, 2023  
Vine charcoal on sandpaper  
28 x 40 in. | 71.1 x 101.6 cm  
31 x 43 in. | 78.7 x 109.2 cm (framed)



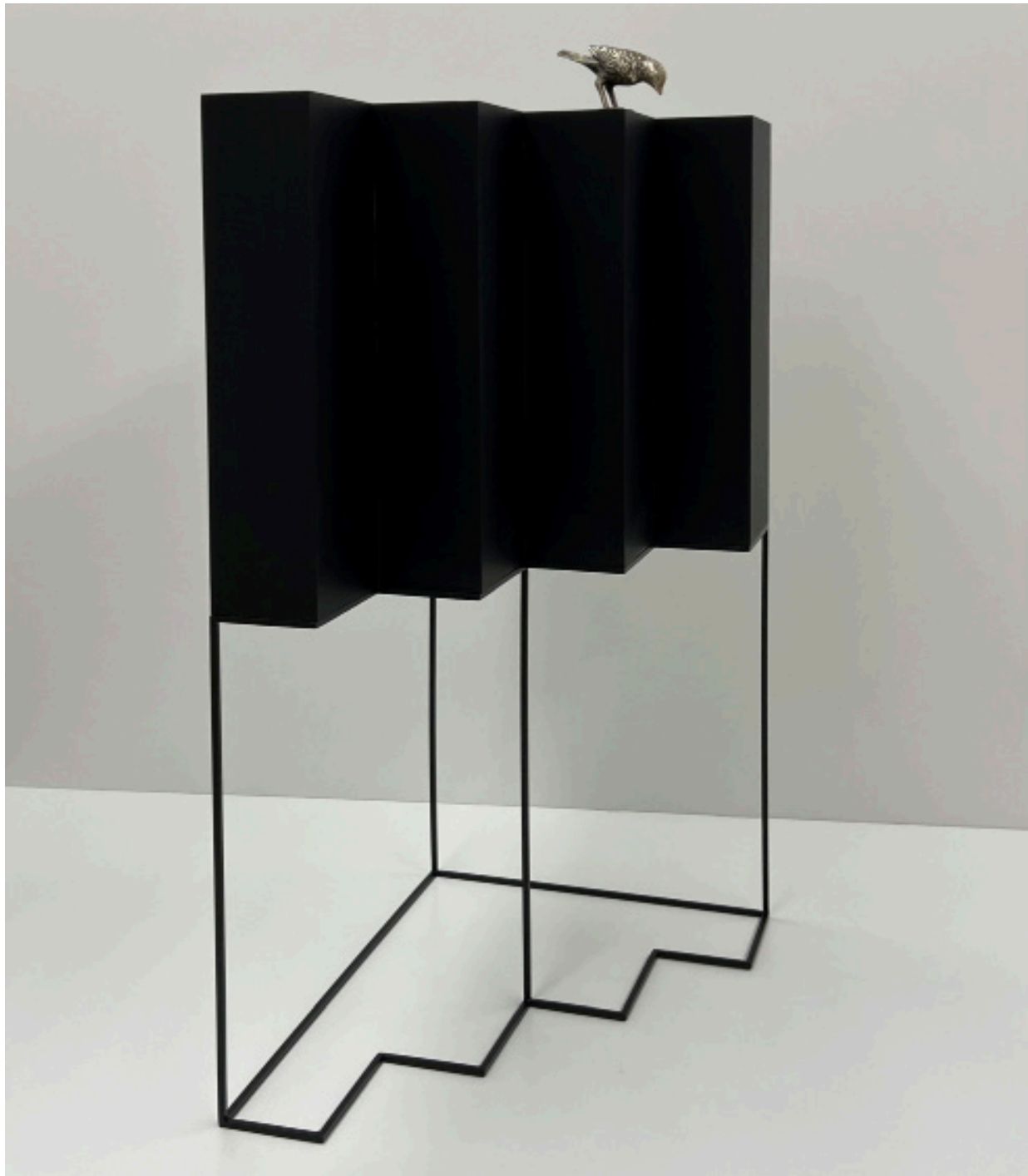


David Shull  
*FLHAT EARTH: Sing Sing*, 2023  
Vine charcoal on sandpaper  
28 x 40 in. | 71.1 x 101.6 cm  
31 x 43 in. | 78.7 x 109.2 cm (framed)



David Shull  
*FLHAT EARTH: Super-flat*, 2023  
Vine charcoal on sandpaper  
28 x 40 in. | 71.1 x 101.6 cm  
31 x 43 in. | 78.7 x 109.2 cm (framed)





David Shull  
*Horizontal Staircase*, 2024  
Plywood, stain, polyurethane, powder coated steel and found object  
38 1/2 x 22 x 15 1/4 in. | 97.8 x 55.9 x 38.7 cm



David Shull  
*Vertical Staircase*, 2024  
Plywood, stain, polyurethane, powder coated steel and found object  
42 3/4 x 20 1/2 x 14 in. | 108.6 x 52.1 x 35.6 cm





David Shull  
*Falling Water Threshold*, 2024  
Plywood, stain, polyurethane, powder coated steel and found object  
10 3/4 X 47 X 19 1/4 inches

## Biography David Shull

David Shull (b. 1978, Fountain Valley, CA) is a Los Angeles-based artist and musician. His work in sculpture, painting, collage, assemblage, video, and song confront a wide array of topics including death, inequality, sexuality, sentimentality, war, and incarceration using distinct and intuitive codified language. Shull's serial practice explores modernist art historical themes as iconography in a sociological narrative that confronts bias surrounding ideas of beauty.

Shull earned a MA in biology from University of California, Santa Cruz in 2001, and an MFA in painting from the Pratt Institute in 2004. For the next 12 years, he remained in New York, during which time Shull exhibited and performed in numerous artist-run project spaces, music venues and apartment galleries. Notable group exhibitions include David Hammons, Hauser & Wirth, Los Angeles (2019); Richard Telles Window Project, Los Angeles (2018); Language curated by Adam Marnie, Oscar Tuazon Studio, Los Angeles (2018); and Mending Wall curated by Alexis Rose, The Pit, Los Angeles (2014).



# CV David Shull

Born Fountian Valley, California  
Lives and works in Los Angeles, California

## Education

2004 MFA, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY  
2001 MA - Biology, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA

## Selected Solo Exhibitions

2024 *FLHAT EARTH FALLING WATER*, NOON Projects, Los Angeles, CA  
2023 *Family Feud / Being Wrong*, NOON Projects, Los Angeles, CA  
2021 *Amarillo Mesa*, C202, Costa Mesa, CA  
2018 *Hostel*, Richard Telles Window Project, Los Angeles, CA  
2015 *The Story of a River*, Happy Fun Hideaway, Brooklyn, NY  
2013 *The Report: Information Worship- Where Has Gone the Body / Secret Project Robot*, Brooklyn, NY  
2012 *Growing the Garden*, Secret Project Robot, Brooklyn, NY  
2011 *The Report Posters*, Manhattan College, Bronx, NY  
2007 *The Offramp to Oblivion*, Adhoc Art, Brooklyn, NY

## Group Exhibitions

2024 Venice Family Clinic Art Walk + Auction, Venice, CA  
Feria Material, NOON Projects, Mexico City  
2023 *The North American Pavilion*, NOON Projects, Frieze UK, No. 9 Cork Street, London, UK  
2022 *Golden Hour*, 183 Shipley, Atlanta, GA  
2019 *David Hammons: Ornette Coleman*, Hauser & Wirth LA, Los Angeles, CA  
2019 *Spring Break Art Fair: Secret Project Robot*, Los Angeles, CA  
2018 *Language*, Curated by Adam Marne, Los Angeles, CA  
2014 *Mending Wall*, The Pit LA, Los Angeles, CA  
2012 *Can't Stop Rock Lobster*, Martos Gallery, New York, NY  
2011 *Hermaphrodites*, Invisible Dog, Brooklyn, NY  
2011 *We Come from Brooklyn*, Aller Art Kunstverein, Bludenz, Austria  
2011 *Untitled*, The Red House, New York, NY  
2010 *Other Spaces*, Curated by Jayne Drost, Center 548, New York, NY  
2010 *BYOA*, Curated by Cicelia Alemani, X Initiative, New York, NY  
2009 *No Soul for Sale*, Curated by Maurizio Cattelan, X Initiative, New York, NY  
2008 *It's About Time, Man*, Curated by William McMillin / Repetti Gallery, Brooklyn, NY  
2007 *Mystic Truths*, Eckhaus, Kutztown, PA  
2005 *Foundations*, Gallery Boreas, Brooklyn, NY  
2005 *Under My Skin*, La Serilla, Barcelona, Spain  
2004 *Once Removed*, Deja Design Gallery, Los Angeles, CA  
2003 *The Grand Group Show*, Daniel Simmons Gallery, Brooklyn, NY