

Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects is pleased to announce Karl Haendel's solo exhibition, *BY AND BY*, opening in the entire gallery on January 7, 2017. The exhibition includes several interconnected works that address the loaded nature of portraiture: the role of this genre in establishing how we, as a culture, remember the acts of public figures, describe who occupies certain positions in our society, and whose images are recorded and why.

In this exhibition, Haendel uses the idea of the portrait to explore contemporary definitions of masculinity, power, and public identity. He undertakes the challenging task of drawing a portrait of what it is to be a man, or perhaps what is expected of men, in images that span a broad range of representations from the heroic to the abject, from the depiction of male achievement in the highest ranks of power to a raw and unsympathetic examination of a middle-aged convicted sex offender. An inquiry into what represents masculinity also requires a look at the conventions of gender representation, as masculinity and femininity have so long been defined, particularly in images, as a codependent set of complimentary traits. In *By and By* Haendel both reasserts and undermines these conventions in heroic portraits of teenage girls riding rodeo, reproductions of murals depicting black civil rights leaders, and a monumental portrait of Hillary Clinton. His drawings and his video work against a tradition of portraiture that collapses individuals into ciphers and symbols that read as shorthand for historical legacies and narrative tropes.

Within the installation of drawings, Haendel will premiere a new video, titled *J.* The product of more than a year of research, *J.* is a video portrait of a middle-aged man who was convicted and served a multi-year prison sentence for sexual assault and is now on parole and in post-release therapy. The video is silent: the camera scans J.'s nude body, skin, hair, hands, feet, genitals. It is disarming and rare to see any man represented in this way: stripped of pretense, guard, identity. 80 pages of unedited interviews between the artist and J. accompany the video. In the interview, Haendel asks his subject probing and at times painfully harsh questions, exploring J's childhood, its joys and traumas, how he came to his values and beliefs, his series of poor choices, the assault he committed, the motivations for his actions, his time in prison, and his own perspective on his recovery from his criminal behavior.

The exhibition will also include a number of works that Haendel made in 2000. These older works include *State Motto Map*, (2000), a large rendering of a map of the continental United States, one of the few works in color the artist has made. Each state is labeled with their official state motto rather than the name of the state. These mottos, reflecting the philosophical disposition of each state at the time of its founding, both personify the states and at times obscure their role within the union; Kentucky's motto is "United we stand, divided we fall", while Washington's motto is "By and By",

from which this exhibition draws its title. Haendel's map is drawn in the pale pinks, blues, and yellows typical of school textbooks, rather than the cobalt blue and deep red in which we now most often see the United States rendered. This politicized color dichotomy, in which blue represents states that vote majority for Democrats and red represents states that vote majority for Republicans, emerged during the 2000 election cycle, the year Haendel made the drawing.

The exhibition concludes with a monumental portrait of Hillary Clinton, the largest drawing Haendel has made to date. The space of the portrait is doubled, so that on the right side of the picture plane the former Presidential candidate's face is laboriously rendered in acute detail, while the left-hand side of the portrait is filled with an expanse of dark hand-shaded graphite, a void or negation. Clinton stands alone, looking beyond the image's frame. In the same room, a recording of the artist's three year-old daughter reciting the colloquial first names of all 44 presidents and one president elect, "George, John, Tom, Jim...", as if they were boys in her class, plays from speakers on stands. Her innocent and cheerful voice belies the historical and personal disappointment of America's inability to add a woman's name to the list.

In *BY AND BY*'s portrait is a drawing, a mural, a map, a list, a documentary, a recording, a reckoning. This investigation of representation continues Haendel's inquiries into what it means to be a man, a father, a citizen—questions that have been central to his practice for many years.

Karl Haendel earned his MFA at UCLA in 2003. He has had solo exhibitions at Museo de Arte de El Salvador; the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Salt Lake City; Locust Projects, Miami; Lever House, New York; The Box, Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Haendel was featured in the 2015 Biennial of the Americas, Denver; the 2014 Whitney Biennial, New York; the 12th Biennale de Lyon in 2013; Prospect II, New Orleans in 2011; and the 2008 and 2004 California Biennial, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach. His work has been included group exhibitions at the Castello di Rivoli, Turin; the Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo; Serpentine Gallery, London; Reykjavik Art Museum; MRAC Sérignan; Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University; Aspen Art Museum; the Rubell Family Collection, Miami; the Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis; the Drawing Center, New York; the Henry Art Gallery, Seattle; the New Museum, New York; the Fundación/Colección Jumex, Mexico City; the Guggenheim Museum, New York; the The School of the Art Institute of Chicago; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. This is Karl Haendel's third solo exhibition at the gallery.

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