

Matthew Brown

Darren Bader

Youth

November 7, 2025–January 10, 2026

390 Broadway

MBG: I like to start with formal analysis. Can you share a description of the contents of the exhibition that you know of thus far?

DB: Words and objects and images. A whole mess of them, some striving for cogency and limpidity, and others attempting to be somewhat fearless in the face of being too legible.

MBG: Are any of the artworks part of existing series or have they been exhibited before in different contexts?

DB: Many are extracted from previous bodies' contexts and themes. Others are unapologetic (concomitantly embarrassing) continuations of existing series. Some are mutations that may fail to improve (or improve to fail!) on the original "species". Others are attempts at meaningfully distinct novelty.

MBG: Are there any connections between the works selected for the show? How do they fit together?

DB: Habits, which must be something like metabolized attempts-at and demands-of rigor. In short the aforementioned word object image (in any order). Plus the brutal human comedy. Also, what is this thing we (can) consider art? The answers (perhaps absent here) prove less apparent every day.

MBG: How does this exhibition respond to the gallery space physically?

DB: The two have to do what they need to do together.

MBG: Will the exhibition change over time?

DB: Due to the exigencies of parenting + requirement(s) of a day job, not as much as I'd hoped. But change will be change.

MBG: I think of a lot of your work as these sentences or absurd proposals. Would any given artwork in the exhibition be one those proposals, just manifested for a viewer experience? Or are these separate things? Am I even making sense?

DB: It's the tension between the verbal and the material and/or visual that's at the crux of this work and so many others.

MBG: This is really important! When you come up with proposals do you have a visual in mind of how it might be manifested?

DB: Sometimes, but it's usually far from the reality that presents itself when dealing with non-verbal materials.

MBG: I use "proposals", but is there another term you use for these types of works? I heard someone else say "sentences" which I thought was an oblique and funny and apt descriptor.

DB: If that someone meant "sentences" in the legal sense it might be more appropriate than the grammatical sense. Sententious could be appropriate too.

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MBG: Anything else you can say about this tension between the verbal (words) and the material (visual)?

DB: "It is what it is."

MBG: The title of the show is "Youth". I like it. Do you want to share where that came from?

DB: Both on and off record, I'd prefer not to.

Darren Bader (b. 1978, Bridgeport, CT) lives and works in New York City.

He participated in the 58th International Art Exhibition, Venice Biennale, Venice (2019); 13th Lyon Biennale (2015); and 2014 Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2014).

Institutional solo and two-person exhibitions of his work have been presented at: By Art Matters, Huangzhou (2023); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2020); Museo Madre, Naples (2017-18); Kölnischer Kunstverein (2015); and MoMA PS1, New York (2012).

Select solo gallery exhibitions have been held at: Sadie Coles HQ, London; Galleria Franco Noero, Turin; Andrew Kreps, New York; Blum & Poe, Los Angeles; Société, Berlin; Alex Zachary, New York, among others.

In 2023, the artist attempted—and failed—to sell his art practice. *Youth* is his first solo exhibition since.

Bader's work is included in the collections of Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles; Zabudowicz Collection, London; K11 Art Foundation, Hong Kong; Fondazione Prada, Milan; and Chicago Booth School of Business Art Collection, Chicago.