

NIGHT GALLERY

TRUE LIES

Curated with Simon Cole

June 30 – July 29, 2017

Night Gallery is pleased to present *True Lies*, a group exhibition curated with Simon Cole, and including the work of Huma Bhabha, Andrea Marie Breiling, Bjorn Copeland, Anne-Lise Coste, Cynthia Daignault, Ian Davis, Georgia Dickie, Mark Flood, Sayre Gomez, Jesse Harris, Deborah Kass, Tau Lewis, Jenine Marsh, Brie Ruais, Heji Shin, Diamond Stingily, Christine Wang, and Kandis Williams.

We live in a time of true lies. Or more accurately, we live in an era of post-truth.

"Post-truth" suggests that facts are subject to emotive reactions and that the impact of information is dependent on its popularity. The term assumes that with greater fluidity of information comes an increasingly malleable public opinion. It's an era where perception and belief are managed through fragmentation, segmentation, and micro-targeting.

True Lies presents a multi-generational group of artists, some of whom use the conflation of fictional and factual narratives in their work, while others incorporate text, puns, wit, or humor to illustrate a larger, graver point. The exhibition considers the confluence of "medium" and "message" in the context of art, politics, and the current socio-political arena.

Text is the dominant characteristic of several works throughout the exhibition—in the work of **Deborah Kass**, **Anne-Lise Coste**, **Jesse Harris**, and **Sayre Gomez**. In *Everything Must Go (Carrera Marble)*, 2017, Gomez renders the commercial slogan as a trompe l'oeil engraving in a marble plaque, pushing a temporary urgency into a permanence that reflects a contemporary commercial world in which everything must always go.

Several other works co-opt the language and imagery of advertising, ultimately subverting it, such as in two new paintings from **Mark Flood**, in which paint and text are layered over advertisement replicas. The works harness the immediacy and energy for which Flood is known, while questioning or, more accurately, trolling global capitalism, popular culture, and contemporary art. **Bjorn Copeland** alters advertising signage by surgically removing portions and then flipping, rearranging, and seamlessly reinserting them, translating the signs into new formal objects.

The media's control over access to information is explored by **Kandis Williams**. Her grid matrix comprising numerous white-skinned and blond-haired female talking heads of Fox News emphasizes that the filter through which Americans receive their news and politics is not only homogenous but sexualized, gendered, and racially-specific.

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In her *Baby Photo* series **Heji Shin** documents the moment that a baby emerges from its mother during actual home births, commercializing and stylizing the moment of birth—the first moment of a person’s life in late capitalism.

The individual nature of the human body is both a place to find personal truth and one where the personal becomes political, such as in the work of **Diamond Stingily**, **Tau Lewis**, and **Huma Bhabha**. Bhabha is known primarily for her figurative forms which often appear dissected or dismembered. In her *Untitled* work from 2013, the artist references the body with a near-life-sized torso image, drawn with oil-stick on Styrofoam.

In the work of **Brie Ruais** and **Andrea Marie Breiling**, the body is centrally present through scale, mass, and movement. Ruais scrapes and pushes raw clay until a form is resolved, the resulting work bearing the marks of her hand and continuing to reference her body in both size and weight. And Breiling’s expressive paintings trace the choreography of the painter’s movement across the piece’s surface.

Works by **Jenine Marsh** and **Georgia Dickie** elevate personal narratives while comingling them with broader meta-narratives. Dickie’s *Marilyn*, 2017, is a tapestry of surgical masks and found hats, sewn together and suspended with aircraft cable and steel tubing. The piece continues her deep interest in found materials and their inherent limitations. In this instance, the missing body and obtuse narrative are simultaneously evident and evasive.

Paintings by **Ian Davis** and **Cynthia Daignault** explore the mediated image and the power of narrative. Daignault’s *History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake*, 2017, comprises 11 paintings of UFO and Bigfoot sightings, volcanic eruptions, clouds and mountains – each is familiar because each is a depiction of someone’s personal snapshot that has been broadcast worldwide. Their sequential order generates a narrative, with each image informing our reading of the next.

As in much of **Christine Wang**’s work, her own implication—along with the viewer’s—in what is being critiqued is central to her large tapestry *Speak Truth to Power*, 2013. Both accusatory and exonerating, in small gold-leaf letters below a broken umbrella reads the line: “YOU HAVE BEEN SELFISH TODAY...IF YOU HAVE A CONSCIENCE.”

Simon Cole is the Director of Cooper Cole Gallery in Toronto, Canada. Cole is a dedicated supporter of the arts on a local and international scale, having exhibited numerous international artists in Canada (often for the first time) as well as promoting Canadian artists to a global audience through international collaborations and participation in leading art fairs. His work has been supported by the City of Toronto, Canada Council for the Arts, and written about in *Frieze* and *Artforum*, among other art publications. In addition to the gallery, Cole is Co-Director of Spectrum Art Projects, a not-for-profit initiative that creates public artworks with the support of community engagement. Cole is a member of the New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA), and is a lifetime member of Art Metropole.