

# NIGHT GALLERY

## GRANT LEVY-LUCERO

*Central*

December 2, 2017 – January 13, 2018

Grant Levy-Lucero's first solo exhibition at Night Gallery continues the artist's exploration of the vernacular of Los Angeles, specifically that of place and iconography in the everyday. Married with forms that reference classical antiquity, these commercial emblems begin to take on a life of their own; brands become reoccurring characters or archetypes—a long-lost friend or a nefarious trickster.

Levy-Lucero gathers his imagery from the hand-painted signs throughout the city. Typically appearing on the outdoor walls of convenience stores to advertise their offerings, this particular form of artwork will be familiar to Angelenos who have driven the length of Beverly, Broadway, Wilshire, or Central. Some of these signs show a certain degree of artistic liberty, thus distorting the symbol while retaining its ubiquitous brand identity.

Some of the earliest examples of sign painting in Western culture date back to Ancient Greece and Rome, when many were illiterate and pictures were used to represent a trade or a product. In contemporary branding, iconic images serve as ambassadors for unrelated commodities (the “swoosh” shape symbolizes activewear, etc.). For individual sign painters to create similar-yet-different renditions of brand logos indicates an evolving visual language in which the image draws meaning far outside of itself. Well preserved in the dry climate of Los Angeles, these signs are the hieroglyphs of our city streets.

In his pots, Levy-Lucero implements forms from the Greco-Roman world, but, similar to his sign painting, the shapes are not exact reproductions so much as allusions. He borrows the decorative, narrative capabilities of the vessel from the Archaic and Classical periods: when they carried etchings on the exterior that depicted scenes from life, Homeric tales, and the world of the gods. In this inexact appropriation, coupled with the language of Los Angeles signs, the artist asserts that mythology is not an enshrined concept of the past but something that grows and changes with the zeitgeist.

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**Grant Levy-Lucero** (b.1981, Los Angeles) has had a recent solo exhibition at Henry Taylor's, Los Angeles. His work has been featured in group exhibitions at Art Toronto, Toronto; 356 Mission, Los Angeles, Sans Titre, Paris; and Club Pro LA, Los Angeles. He lives and works in Los Angeles.