

NIGHT GALLERY

2276 E. 16th Street, Los Angeles, California 90021 nightgallery.ca

ROBERT NAVA

Vs

July 20 – August 17, 2019

Night Gallery is pleased to announce Robert Nava Vs, an exhibition of new paintings which will be on view from July 20 to August 24, 2019. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, July 20, from 7–10pm. This is Nava's first solo exhibition at Night Gallery, having appeared in multiple group presentations with the gallery in 2018.

Nava is known for paintings of fantastical creatures in acrylic, oil stick, and graphite pencil in blunt, kinetic lines, overlaid with spray paint. These emerge from a daily drawing ritual, intended to awaken purely rhythmic instincts, which he equates to the most unconscious forms of markmaking. From these sketches arise the intuitive figures that appear in his paintings. These creatures merge mythological characters that have persisted over millennia (gryphons, dragons, witches, among others) with impulsive contemporary flourishes (airplanes, buses, electric currents, flamethrowers). In their way, these monsters offer new archetypes of the present day, intuitively combining ancient folklore with the mundane machinery of 21st-century life.

By its title, Robert Nava's new solo exhibition suggests that the artist is in battle with the creatures of his own creation, encountering (and quickly vanquishing) one monstrous being after the next. This battle could refer to the process by which Nava translates his drawings to canvas, and the balance by which he must create careful compositions while preserving the drawings' spirit of spontaneity. These deceptively simple works, with their unexpectedly complex colors and intuitively minimal forms, slowly reveal Nava's virtuosity and rigorous labor. The paintings come to present the artist facing off against the limits of his own imagination, grappling with the energy of each of his creatures. The works become trophies of the artist conquering his craft, mementos of his invented adversaries.

Robert Nava (b. East Chicago, IN) received his MFA from Yale, New Haven, CT; and his BA from Indiana University Northwest, Gary, IN. He has had solo exhibitions at Sorry We're Closed Gallery, Brussels, Belgium; and Night Gallery, Los Angeles, CA. His work has been included in group exhibitions at V1 Gallery, Copenhagen, Denmark; Wayne State University, Detroit, MI; and Safe Gallery, Brooklyn, NY. He was the recent subject of a profile in GQ, and in the past year was awarded a residency at the Macedonia Institute in New York state. Nava is currently based in Brooklyn, NY.