

Chase Hall

You can lead a horse to water

Curated by Lolita Cros

26 – 30 September 2018

Lolita Cros will present works by New York-based artist Chase Hall. A self-taught painter, sculptor, and photographer, Hall uses his artwork as a platform through which to critically engage the visual history of racial bigotry in the United States. By employing references of moments past, Hall aims to draw attention to inequity and prejudice that still exist today.

A horse is repeatedly portrayed in Hall's show *You can lead a horse to water*, existing as multi-faceted trope to analyze African Americans' relationship to the animal throughout history. A symbol of liberation, travel, and strength, the horse was crucial for early black America as the relationship they built with horses allowed them to escape the bindings of slavery as well as start developing an economic structure after the Emancipation Proclamation with the birth of legal horse racing.

Hall's work also brings attention to the story of Jocko Graves, who's historical misrepresentation and identity finds parallels to racial issues of today. As the story goes, Graves was a 12-year-old slave designated to watch after George Washington's estate while he and his army went to fight in the Battle of Trenton. Instructed by Washington to tend to the horses and keep a lantern burning so the soldiers could find their way home, Graves was found frozen to death the day after the United States claimed victory. The young boy remained in the exact spot where he was ordered to stand watch with a lantern still burning in his clenched frozen hand. Graves' tale was commemorated by a statue commissioned by George Washington, which is to this day a reminder of the insurmountable resilience of African Americans throughout history.

Over time, the original portrayal of Jocko Graves would change and its meaning lost, becoming popularized as a thankless lawn ornament displayed around the country like a demeaning relic of a racist past. By reclaiming these readymades in his work, Hall takes ownership of the meaning of the lawn jockey and gives him the proper context and memorialization as a beacon of heroism to African Americans.

Growing up with a horse trainer mother, Hall spent time moving across America. In his journeys, he was confronted by lawn jockeys time and time again. As a mixed-race child of

African American and white parents, he felt like he had more in common with the lawn ornament than the fair skinned bourgeois who employed his mother. The stereotypical image of the jockey creates a massive amount of disinformation that widens the gap of equality as it continues to circulate from generation to generation. Existing between two cultures, Hall is constantly analyzing both sides of the spectrum, not finding true acceptance in either corner.

The show will feature a range of Hall's paintings and sculptures. Using found metal casts from the early 1900's, he allows us to reevaluate our interactions and relationships with these artifacts. By appropriating mundane elements, Hall's work helps to unlearn the history that we've been taught and articulates the racial grounds of America. Like a Trojan horse, the lawn jockeys have appeared for centuries to be lighthearted and decorative when in reality they represent oppression and abuse. As a parallel, Hall's works come off as playful but also act as a skeleton key to our deepest subliminal understandings, presenting a double conscience of the past yet working to promote a better future.

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CHASE HALL Born in 1993 and raised across Minnesota, Chicago, Las Vegas, Colorado, Dubai and Los Angeles, Chase lives and works out of his studio in the East Village of New York. He has been included in exhibitions with: ICALE in Los Angeles, IMMA Project Space in Ireland, Kuntsthalle Basel in Switzerland, Museo Tamayo in Mexico City, Depart Foundation in Los Angeles, Curateur Collective in New York, Cob Gallery in London and Drawing A Blank in Harlem among others. Hall recently attended The Mountain School of arts in Los Angeles and the Macedonia Institute in Hudson Valley, NY. He has released the publications: Gaucho, Come, Irie Jesus, Mug, Milk and Honey, Milk and Honey II. His work was awarded "The Best VICE Photos of 2016" and his artwork has been featured in: Vice, Vogue, ID, Dazed, Purple, MILK, Office, Garage, New York Times and New York Times T magazine.

LOLITA CROS Born in Paris, Cros is an independent curator living and working in New York City. She is known for creating projects and exhibitions that combine work by both established and emerging artists. With each project she proposes an alternative venue that asks the viewer to revisit their expectations and look at the work through a new and unique lens. Cros has exhibited works in various spaces such as a Chinese restaurant, a rooftop and a truck to name a few. Having collaborated on various projects with male artists such as Daniel Arsham and Peter Saul, Cros has most recently concentrated her time to exhibit and promote the work of female artists. In 2017, she opened The Salon at The Wing SoHo, followed by DUMBO, featuring works by over 30 female artists, both emerging and established, ranging from Tschabalala Self to Jenny Holzer.