

Akim Monet Fine Arts, LLC



Paul McCARTHY (b. 1945), Benjamin WEISSMAN (b. 1957), Naotaka HIRO (b. 1972)

Nao, I Think This Is Your Beer (Head Jesus Dead)

Acrylic, charcoal, graphite on paper

Framed size: 26 x 20 in (66.04 x 50.8 cm)

2015

PROVENANCE

Mara McCarthy, Los Angeles

EXHIBITED

Disruptive selection, Fall 2019, Popcorn Gallery Akim Monet Fine Arts, Los Angeles

Of Mice and Men, October 5 - December 5, 2020, Popcorn Gallery Akim Monet Fine Arts, Los Angeles

NOTES

The present work was executed collectively by Naotaka Hiro, Benjamin Weissman, and Paul McCarthy in the context of the 2014 exhibition *Men in L.A.: Three Generations of Drawings* at The Box, Los Angeles, which featured a massive collection of over 400 drawings created by the three artists, individually and in collaboration with one another.

The press release of the exhibition begins:

Three men all living and working in Los Angeles, all making obsessive amounts of drawings. In the Studio, at the mountain cabin, at the dinner table. The drawings take over, the drawings provide space for thought, they provide inspiration for new work, they are the new work.

In the words of visual arts writer Matt Stromberg:

The title of the exhibition overreaches somewhat—there are not really three generations, but rather three artists separated by less than thirty years in age. Yet what the exhibition does accomplish is to gather together twenty-five years of drawings by artists who depict the body in all its grotesquely sexual, scatological, and effluvial glory. [...] The Men in the exhibition title refers not only to the artists, but to their subject matter. In different ways, they each use drawing to explore ideas about masculinity. McCarthy and Weissman offer up ambivalent takes on what it means to be a man, full of insecurity, loathing, and phallic infatuation. They skewer heroic male tropes, while at the same time compulsively presenting a darkly comic, immature hedonism. Hiro shares the other artists' corporeal fascination, but his drawings are quieter, more focused than their frenetic output. McCarthy's and Weissman's drawings give us a glimpse of them working through familiar ideas, whereas Hiro's work shows an artist branching out into unknown terrain.

In order to appreciate the immediacy of the present drawing, one can only imagine the lively conversation between Hiro, Weissman, and McCarthy that on the spur of the moment, fostered the creation of a set of exceptional collaborative works, this being one of the most poignant examples.



Installation view: *Disruptive selection*, Popcorn Gallery LA, Akim Monet Fine Arts, Fall 2019
From left: *Enkulpion* - a Spanish Renaissance Gold & Silver reliquary, ca. 1500
Nao, I Think This Is Your Beer (Head Jesus Dead), 2015
Thurible - a rare ornate church incense burner, possibly French, or from Flanders, ca. 1880



Paul McCarthy, Benjamin Weissman, Naotaka Hiro
Nao, *I Think This Is Your Beer (Head Jesus Dead)*, 2015

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