

Aaron Fowler

Exceedingly and Abundantly Blessed

Ghebaly Gallery

November 2 - December 8, 2018

M+B Gallery

November 3 - December 22, 2018

Ghebaly Gallery and M+B are pleased to jointly present a two-part exhibition of new work by **Aaron Fowler**. Unfolding across the two spaces, the exhibition features a new body of sculptures and spatial interventions in the artist's signature language of memoiristic, maximalist bricolage.

In large-scale assemblages that bridge the categories of painting and sculpture, Fowler deploys a great range of found materials, from paint-soaked cotton balls and motorized barber chairs to shards of mirrored glass and lengths of LED string lights. He corrals these disparate objects into tributes to significant people in his life with a special focus on his immediate family. Fowler sees each one of his images as an active, physical way of manifesting the future, free of limitations for himself and his family members. He frequently depicts goals and milestones he wishes to see achieved and better lives being built together.

Throughout, his all-over, jam-packed use of materials lends an improvisatory tone to compositions that are highly evocative of many art histories, from Byzantine iconography to Dada to the Harlem Renaissance. Curator Amanda Hunt has called this "wild, weighty, massive" work, speaking equally to the material presence that each piece commands and to the ways that Fowler's practice reaches quickly from the personal to wider American narratives of migration, upward mobility, and the mirroring of inward and outward journeys.

In one example, a monumental structure rotates slowly at the center of the gallery, illuminated across its center by the word *MOVEMENT* in red lights. Behind this word lies a scene of a young man, the artist's brother, leaving his childhood home and setting out Westward for a new life of independence. The piece, full of restless movement and self-actualizing hope, appropriates the imagery of the pioneers and Manifest Destiny for a new vision of possibility in America.

Across both venues, the exhibition addresses migration and the profound effects that a change of place can work on a person. It also meditates on the capacity of an autobiographical narrative to reflect a wider world beyond the personality at its center. At M+B, a floor to ceiling installation of shattered mirrors evokes violence while also drawing the visitor's perception to the ways they are reflected, not merely literally, in the scenes that Fowler constructs. Likewise, at Ghebaly Gallery, visitors traverse ranges of soil and sand in an installation that places them at equal footing with Fowler's cast of characters shown striving across the earth to reach, as Steinbeck put it, "the beckoning mountains with a brown grass love." To reach, in other words, the many promises of California.

Aaron Fowler (b. 1988, St Louis, Missouri) received his BFA from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and his MFA from Yale University School of Art. He was an artist-in-residence at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2014 and was the recipient of the Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artist Grant in 2015. His exhibition at Ghebaly and M+B is not his first time showing simultaneously across multiple venues; earlier in 2018, New Yorkers could see his exhibitions concurrently at the New Museum, Salon 94, and David Totah Gallery. Other recent solo exhibitions include Diggs Gallery at Winston-Salem State University (2016); Beeler Gallery at Columbus College of Art & Design (2016); and Diane Rosenstein Gallery (2016). Recent group exhibitions include *Made in L.A.* at the Hammer Museum (2018); Saatchi Gallery (2017); Rubell Family Collection (2016); and the Studio Museum in Harlem (2015). Aaron Fowler lives and works in Los Angeles and New York.

Accessibility

Please note that the Ghebaly Gallery portion of this exhibition is not ADA accessible. It features floors covered in uneven dirt and sand. Please email gan@ghebaly.com for assistance or support in accessing this exhibition.