

ADAM MYSOCK

What is Not Us 21 September – 29 October 2016

PRESS RELEASE

JONATHAN FERRARA GALLERY is proud to announce *What is Not Us*, an exhibition of Cincinnati-based artist **Adam Mysock**. For his third solo show at the gallery, Mysock unveils a new series of his characteristic revisionist-art historical, masterly detailed, acrylic paintings. The exhibition will be on view in the main gallery from 21 September through 29 October 2016 with a *First Saturday Gallery Opening* on **1 October** from **6-9pm** in conjunction with the annual *Art for Arts' Sake* citywide art openings.

The artist says of the exhibition . . .

If a continuum exists between truth and fiction, conspiracy theories seem to drift slightly above it, mocking the spectrum's limitations.

To behold such defiance is entertaining. It's frightening. And it's addictively empowering.

As conspiracy theorists cherry-pick accommodating nuggets of fact, rearrange them into innumerable, distorted realities, and seduce us into exporting our vulnerabilities, we get to imagine the abandonment of social rules and mores as a plucky act against an oppressive power. We get to experience that life-affirming heart-rate increase that comes when we're scared. Furthermore, we get to form identity groups based on the non-existent patterns we choose to perceive around us.

*For decades, perhaps some of our most gripping conspiracy theories have involved tales of alien visitation. In my youth (during the 1980s and 90s) television shows and movies—from *The X-Files* to *Alien*, from *Alf* to *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*—offered abundant opportunity to speculate on secretive visitors from distant worlds. These days, in the middle of the 2016 presidential race, it's our political discourse that seems to supply many of the most prominent conspiracy theories about secretive visitors; only now, our aliens are illegal rather than extraterrestrial, coming from Syria or Mexico instead of Mars or a far-off galaxy.*

*It is exactly this curiously persevering subject matter and the shifting authors and venues shaping our conspiracy theories that led to *What Is Not Us*.*

Fundamentally, the paintings in this show examine the enduring qualities of the alien as conspiracy subject. The theorists of our age gravitate toward seeing the alien as a harbinger of some discomfort; they habitually contaminate a believer's fragile sense of self. The alien is typically presented as singularly focused, with motives rarely shaped by nuance. And the alien is usually afforded just enough of the exotic for the over-suspicious to become lazily curious, interested enough to look over but not to come over.*

*However, with all conspiracy theories evoking themes of shifting power—which group has it and which group wants it—the work in *What Is Not Us* is also meant to encourage consideration of an unstable impression of our self-perceived sense of control. It's meant to provide a space in which we might reflect on the political climates that yield conspiracy theories, specify how we envision the mysterious players of these explanatory narratives, and question the rationality of searching for an antagonist or conspiracy theories in the first place.*



Adam Mysock was born in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1983 - the son of an elementary school English teacher and a lab technician who specializes in the manufacturing of pigments. On account of a steady stream of folk tales from his mother, his father's vividly dyed work clothes, and a solid Midwestern work ethic, he developed an interest in painting and drawing all things Americana from a very early age. Mysock earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Painting and Art History by 2004 from Tulane University. He then received an MFA from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

After his studies, he became the mural coordinator for the City of Cincinnati's MuralWorks mural program and worked as an adjunct drawing professor at Sinclair Community College in Dayton. In the summer of 2008, Mysock became a Professor of Practice at Tulane University from x date to x date. In 2016 he returned to his hometown to pursue his painting full time. Mysock's work has been exhibited in Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois, Georgia, Mississippi and Louisiana and is in private collections across the US, including those of Thomas Coleman and Michael Wilkinson, and the 21c Museum. He was a 2009 jury winner in the annual *No Dead Artists* juried exhibition. On August 4th, 2012 he was awarded first prize "Best in Show" in the Ogden Museum's *Louisiana Contemporary Annual Juried Exhibition*. Mysock exhibited at Pulse Miami Art Fair in December 2012 with Jonathan Ferrara Gallery and he was selected for the 2013 Edition of New American Paintings. Mysock was exhibited in a solo project booth at the VOLTA9 Art Fair in Basel, Switzerland where the SØR Rusche Collection acquired two paintings. In 2016, the works were featured in a Baroque and Contemporary group exhibition from the SØR Rusche Collection, Oelde/Berlin at Kunsthalle Jesuitenkirche as well as in a solo exhibition entitled *When Everything Was Wonderful Tomorrow* at Galerie Andreas Binder in Munich, Germany. His work was also featured in *EXCHANGE*, an international exhibition at Galerie Jochen Hempel, Berlin as well as Großer Herbstrundgang in Leipzig, Germany, and also the acclaimed traveling exhibition *Guns in the Hands of Artists*. Most recently, Mysock was selected as one of two recipients of the fifth Manifest Artist Residency (MAR) Award upon his return to his hometown.

For further information, press or sales inquiries please contact the gallery director, Matthew Weldon Showman, at matthew@jonathanferraragallery.com or at the gallery +1.504.522.5471.

Please join the conversation with JFG on Facebook (@Jonathan Ferrara Gallery), Twitter (@JFerraraGallery), and Instagram (@JonathanFerraraGallery) via the hashtags #AdamMysock, #WhatsNotUs, and #JonathanFerraraGallery.

