



Over the Influence Presents

Derek Aylward

Animal House

15 July to 27 August 2022



Derek Aylward, *Animal House*, 2022, Acrylic on canvas, 152.4 by 182.9 cm, 60 by 72 in, Photo courtesy of the Artist and Over the Influence

Over the Influence, Hong Kong is thrilled to present *Animal House*, an exhibition of new paintings by Massachusetts-based artist Derek Aylward. *Animal House* will be on view from 15 July to 27 August 2022.

Derek Aylward is known for his unique visual language that can be described as contemporary folklore, combining humanoid figures that are generally depicted with animal or otherworldly qualities, peppered with superheroes and cartoons of the mid-21st century, and with a cubist-expressionist edge.

Aylward's practice is rooted in drawing, with a feverish compulsion to put pencil to paper, pen to napkin, or any mark-making tool that may leave a record on a surface. As such, Aylward's paintings retain the raw and gestural qualities of a drawing; expressive marks punctuated with hard clean lines reveal a similar urgency, but with broad brush strokes, complex texture, and handling of the acrylic medium in a way that reveals the great variation between flat matte and shiny surfaces, a variety of cut-out forms, figures and abstraction, all heightened by a palette that is equally vibrant, whether fluorescent, primaries or muted earth tones.

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Aylward uses animals as figures to explore the possibilities of a new technique by instinctively rendering the forms about the surface to see how they interact with one another, where the eye wanders through the puma pattern, and what will be discovered through this repetition of imagery. The text “Thank you” appears at the corner, as if transferred from a plastic grocery store bag onto the surface, the artist cleverly anecdotes another point of discovery and interpretation for the viewers.

In *Pointing Fingers*, 2022 the artist liberates the gesture from previous works, and transplants, and renders multiple facsimiles throughout this large canvas. Aylward imbues each “pointed finger” with a uniqueness of personality while moderating the movement and rhythm of the repeated imagery as if managing the chaos of the “pattern” within the canvas’ surface.

In Aylward’s most recent exhibition at V1 Gallery, Copenhagen, Jesper Elg aptly shared: “Aylward’s figurative language builds on a long lineage of expressive painting, you sense Pablo Picasso, Willem de Kooning, Daniel Johnston, Rose Wylie, and Eddie Martinez in the conversation. His expression is imbued with an unrestrained immediacy and joy in painting, creating images that feel radical and classic, intuitive, and free, while equally laborious and carefully composed, with a sense of concern for both protagonists and vessels, the stupid and the important.”

The title of the exhibition, *Animal House*, cannot help but evoke the 1978 American Comedy of the same name. The film is about trouble-making fraternity members who challenge authority with edgy and tasteless humor. Like the film, Aylward’s subjects are an unruly cast of characters, rendered in a style that is affiliated with defiance but with the folk-art flair that is simple and nostalgic. Whether vignettes or crowded scenes, Aylward distills within the paintings of *Animal House*, a dichotomy that both harnesses the energy of the frenzied figures and enlivened palettes, while also distilling the works in a way that offers contemplation and meditation.

Artist Bio

Derek Alyward (b. 1976, Boston, MA, USA) lives and works in Cambridge, MA, USA. He is a self-taught painter. His works were featured in several exhibitions at key galleries and museums, including the Blum & Poe, Los Angeles and the Marian Cramer Projects. Derek Alyward has been featured in articles for the arrestedmotion and the “Art Daily”. The most recent article is Exhibition at Marian Cramer Projects Presents an Eclectic Selection of Works by 18 International Artists Written for the Art Daily in July 2020.

Exhibition

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Location

1/F, 159 Hollywood Road
Central Hong Kong

Press Contact

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