



www.catboxcontemporary.com
catboxcontemporary@gmail.com
(973)-886-0156
RIDGEWOOD, NY



"Holy Holy Holy"
Morgan Mandalay
September 16 - October 14 , 2018

OPENING SEPTEMBER 16, 4-6 PM

Catbox Contemporary is proud to present, "Holy Holy Holy", an exhibition of new work by Morgan Mandalay. Using the "Book of Tobit" (a Catholic story centering around the exorcising of demons) as a starting point, Mandalay generates a visual narrative about class, populism, and agency through the lens of 18th century painting. The walls of the gallery are painted a pale pink, meant to reference the Timken Museum of Art, a small museum in San Diego Mandalay used to frequent because of its free entry for the public and prominent collection of Rococo paintings. Here he uses the sentimentality of the setting to help conjure the anarchistic energy latent in painting's history.

The scenes in Mandalay's paintings are strained through gaping mouths filled with pearly impasto teeth. Caught between an oral-inspection and a scream, the mouths of Mandalay become a framing device for the artist's representations of Williams Blake's depiction of Albion (the main character in a story about the fall and division of a primeval man) and a French cartoon of King Louis XVI (the last king of France before the fall of the monarchy during the French Revolution) with his family before his execution. In both paintings, the narrative focus is a personal descent from the known to the otherworldly and the breakdown of established institutional norms into fragmented parts. To help channel that anarchy, a ceramic sculpture of a splayed fish (somewhere between Soutine and a wax anatomical model) turned incense-holder sits on the gallery's checkered floor. The strings of smoke from the incense mimic Mandalay's gestural paint handling.

The iconoclastic nature of Mandalay's engagingly grotesque mouths against the soft colors and lines of his Rococo influence depict an artist who is at odds with the classism and imposed romance of bygone eras that were filled with oppression, anarchy, and violence.

Morgan Mandalay (b. 1985, Long Beach, California) Mandalay has had solo presentations of his work at City Limits (Oakland, CA, USA), Et al. etc. (San Francisco, CA, USA), in Art Bogotá's Proyectos (Bogotá, COL), Yau-tepec (Mexico City, MEX), and Helmuth Projects (San Diego, CA, USA). Mandalay's work has recently been included in group and collaborative exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, Kimberly Klark (Queens, NY, USA), Deslave (Tijuana, MEX) and LVL3 (Chicago, IL, USA). He has a forthcoming solo exhibitions with BWSMX (Mexico City, MEX). Curatorial projects have included SPF15, DATE NIGHT (both San Diego, CA, USA), which both operated without walls, and Sunday Project (Chicago, IL, USA). He received his BFA (2014) from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and MFA (2017) from University of California San Diego. Mandalay recently completed a post-graduate fellowship with Shandaken Project's Paint School in New York City. Mandalay lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

"Holy Holy Holy", opens on September 16th and runs through October 14th. An opening will be held on Sunday, September 16th, from 4-6 PM. Please contact catboxcontemporary@gmail.com with any inquiries. Catbox Contemporary is located in an apartment in Ridgewood, NY (contact for exact address).