

Meggs
Heavenly Creatures

Los Angeles, CA - Thinkspace is pleased to present *Heavenly Creatures*, featuring new work by acclaimed Australian artist David 'Meggs' Hooke. Renowned for his founding work and involvement with the *Everfresh Studio* collective - established in Melbourne in 2004 - Meggs has been a prolific street artist and exhibitor for over a decade. Distilling his inspiration from an amalgam of pop cultural references, ancient mythology, classical imagery, and street art, Meggs' recombines familiar imagery to explore and reinvent the archetype.

In *Heavenly Creatures*, Meggs explores the persistence of mythological themes and imagery through a distinctly contemporary voice. Through his dynamic, and highly detailed, signature mixed media style, Meggs creates characters that merge aspects of the contemporary superhero or comic book character with aspects of the classical mythological entity, revealing a shared thematic lineage despite their seemingly disparate origins. Meggs combines representational elements with expressionistic abstraction, ever seeking to strike a balance between the two. His interest in the ways in which fantasy becomes an arbiter of secular conflict, leads to the re-imagining of familiar stories with renewed energy and relevance. We look to the characters of myth and fantasy to embody difficult polarities and resolve our deepest longings. By tapping into this intensity, Meggs' explores the power of story in the constitution of belief and ideology. Drawing from our shared identification with archetypal narratives, whether they be culled from ancient mythology or the fantasy of comic books, Meggs' work appeals to the endurance of these myths, and the ways in which we continue to look to them to reflect our sense of self and other.

Heavenly Creatures will feature ambitious new works by Meggs ranging from painting, sculpture, and installation. Working across media, the artist will also be creating a large scale thaumatrope as part of the exhibition installation - an antiquated Victorian device used historically to demonstrate the persistence of vision. The thaumatrope in the context of *Heavenly Creatures* speaks to the stamina of the historical precedent, while also literally demonstrating the recombination of an image as it is optically derived from two distinct parts - an apt metaphor for Meggs' work. The artist's interest in fostering an exchange between historical themes and contemporary culture is apparent. Meggs strives to revitalize the aesthetic encounter and to devise new ways for people to experience and engage with his work, whether it be in the context of the gallery, or on a wall in the urban landscape. In *Heavenly Creatures* Meggs explores the capacity of myth to reconcile the secular with fantasy, and creates work that speaks forcefully to our shared desire for some existential compass.

Handiedan
Elegant Universe

Concurrently on view in the Thinkspace project room is *Elegant Universe*, featuring new work by Netherlandish artist Handiedan. Handiedan creates elaborate three dimensional collage pieces from a cut and paste method of re-assembly. Starting with the iconic imagery of the vintage pin-up girl, popularized in the 30's, the artist creates complex images from a combination of pattern, figurative imagery, and symbol. Her materials are culled from a vast array of printed cultural currency. Appropriating everything from postage stamps, and legal tender, to origami paper patterns, and historical sheet music motifs, the artist's work is a combination of re-design and aggregation. Her multi-layered compositions transform found two dimensional imagery, literally re-imagining it in relief.

Handiedan's facility and skill in graphic design, illustration, and photography, is immediately visible in her complex works. Graphically sophisticated, their actual assemblage involves a highly detailed sculptural component. The artist incorporates wood and other materials to raise the surfaces and increase their dimensionality. At times the works feel like complex visual puzzles, with pattern and figurative elements interchangeably intermixed. The degree of complexity and depth is impressive. A pastiche of historical styles, the artist borrows from the Baroque to the Neo-Classical, and from the Victorian to the post-war eras. Handiedan explores beauty as a process of aggregation and re-construction, as she re-assembles the found into highly detailed compositions. The artist also incorporates subtle drawing elements - small tattoos, and seemingly haphazard ballpoint pen doodles - to remind us of her agency in the work's making, and to strategically interrupt her artfully re-purposed illusions.

Internationally exhibited, Handiedan has shown extensively. Her work is currently part of a significant Museum survey show entitled: *HEY! Modern Art & Pop Culture II* at Musée La Halle Saint Pierre, in Paris, France.