

MIGUEL ABREU GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: *Sequence 8: one work, one or two weeks*
ALEX CARVER

Location: 36 Orchard Street, New York, NY 10002

Dates: February 10 – February 26, 2022

Reception: Thursday, February 10, 5 – 7pm

Miguel Abreu Gallery is pleased to announce the opening, on Thursday, February 10, of *Sequence 8: one work, one or two weeks* – Alex Carver. The presentation will be held at the gallery's 36 Orchard Street location.

Painting as a primitive form of cultural technology is abundant with all too exploited analogies for the body and its viscera. Often, invoking such a metaphor, contemporary painting is alluded to through anthropomorphic terms such as zombie or cadaver, which may adequately describe the suspension of the medium, situating it between autopsy and undead animism.

In *No Altars*, a 28,000-year-old steppe bison, a male couple from Pompeii embracing and cast in volcanic ash along with a local horse join a dog and cat from the 16th century. The latter were intentionally mummified and used in folk magic tradition – sealed into the cavities of buildings to ward off evil spirits. Preserved in magnificent and uncanny detail these bodies have been radically transformed by their respective and unique forms of embalming through both natural and human processes. Alex Carver mutates these exquisite corpses again with low relief outlines that are frottaged to canvas with oil paint. The bodies appear in the painterly vortex of *No Altars* as if fused into the techno-futuristic architectural space of a large CT scanner circular casing. The painting itself becomes a kind of vision machine – not unlike a biomedical tool – a device to penetrate the abstracted bodies suspended in its woven membrane.

No Altars insists on the contemporariness of its figures and their animism. These cadavers are already zombies clawing into the discourse of painting. In more general terms, Carver's recent works overlay different forms of image production, each of which seems to oscillate, phasing and emerging in the direction of the eye and generating the sensation of one realm of information becoming visible only by way of another. The depicted bog bodies are mummified, high resolution images that the earth itself has produced. Paradoxically, they are preserved in a state of decay, resisting fixity, diagrammatical interpretation and binary distinction.

Recurrent images of plant material take on a special relevance in these paintings, as advanced biomedical grafting techniques now involve the use of plant fibers as the skeletal structure for transplanting and growing new tissue, transfusing natural and technological processes. Through his own layering of machine-stenciled screens, frottage and brushwork, and the combining of scientific precision with the fantastical, Carver's paintings develop an elusive world of imagery in which dense layers are splintered with negative images, like a vectorized labyrinth, set against a sweeping gesso ground that gathers and binds together the painting's diverse materials.

Alex Carver (b. 1984, Boise, Idaho) lives and works in New York and Boise. He earned an MFA from Columbia University, and is a graduate of Cooper Union. Potent Stem, his second solo exhibition at Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin, was held in 2021. He had his first solo show, External Fixation, at Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, in 2019. In 2018, he participated in the collaborative two-part painting show Bubble Revision, Miguel Abreu Gallery and Call Out Tools, Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler with Avery Singer and Pieter Schoolwerth. His debut solo exhibition, Cell, was held at Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler in 2018. Carver's collaborative feature film with Daniel Schmidt, The Unity of All Things, was presented at the 2013 Locarno International Film Festival, Switzerland. Other film works have been shown in international venues and festivals such as Tate

Modern (London, 2014), Berlinale (2015), and the Vancouver International Film Festival (2013). In 2021, he participated in Our Other Us, the 4th Art Encounters Biennial in Timisoara, Romania, curated by Mihnea Mircan and Kasia Redzisz. His second solo exhibition with Miguel Abreu Gallery will take place in the fall of 2022.

Carver's work is held in the permanent collections of the Kistefos Museum (Norway), the Pinault Collection, and the Ståhl Collection (Norway).

For more information or for visuals, please contact the gallery:

Miguel Abreu Gallery

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Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10AM to 6PM and by appointment

Subway: F to East Broadway; B, D to Grand Street; J, M, Z to Delancey / Essex Street