

CASSINA PROJECTS

508 West 24th Street
New York, NY 10011

For Immediate Release

Beyond the Cartoon

Curated by **ARTUNER**

September 15 - October 22, 2016

Opening Reception: Thursday, September 15, 6-8 PM



This exhibition explores the language of the cartoon as a way of making sense of the world at large. In doing so, it expands on the multi-faceted universe of cartoons and the impact it has had on various generations of contemporary artists. The animated world is a space that is in constant flux. Accordingly, it seems that the language of cartoons plays a crucial role in helping us understand the world we now live in; characters of the fantasy world have come to have a status as real as any figure from history.

Andy Holden's *Laws of Motion in a Cartoon Landscape* reflects on the physics of a cartoon environment; it dramatically advances that history has come to an end and that the world is now a cartoon. In this animated world it appears as though anything can happen, yet not anything can; certain rules have come to form and certain actions endlessly reoccur. Holden's film, with the artist himself appearing as a cartoon character to narrate his thesis, proposes that an examination of how physics works in cartoons might tell us something about the world we now live in, and how to be an artist in such a world.

The tradition of the cartoon as a space of flattening out, and as a means by which to analyze the everyday, is sustained in the work of **Stephen Felton**. Indeed, this language is used to explain something about painting and representation itself. The artist's sparse and colorful forms examine the world through an accentuation of its most pared down contours: their essentials. Meanwhile, **Rose Wylie** has developed her own visual vernacular, which is indebted to, and reflects upon, the vernacular of animated cartoons as well as other elements of popular culture.

The wall-hanging works of **Rhys Coren** appear as approximations of paintings that deliberately muddle the languages of pop and minimalism. Varied shapes – both on and of the canvas – give the impression they've been peeled directly from animated features. Comic lines appear out of time, a-historical, and humorously seductive. **Paulo Nimer Pjota**, for his part, assimilates animated characters into vast unstretched canvases and metallic strips. Cartoon figures such as Woody Woodpecker, Spiderman, Mickey Mouse, and an animated Darth Vader intermingle with textured, worked-into fabrics and street art forms – with musical inspiration and biographical impressions from the artist's native Brazil.

Rachel Maclean's autodidactic use of technology generates a candy-colored world; one of quotation, infantile narcissism, and terror. Maclean's work looks at how the internet has restructured the space of the imagination: her green-screen experiments enable her to play all the characters, which have become so exaggerated that they appear to be a cartoon of themselves, promulgating a biting critique of the way the media controls the space of representation. Though **Jeff Keen's** practice has only recently garnered acclaim in the realm of fine art, he has long been lauded as an experimental filmmaker par excellence. His filmic works often incorporate stop motion animation and, like Maclean, he tends to include himself as a protagonist. Mickey Mouse and comic book clippings abound throughout both his short films and collage works. Keen was a proponent of the notion of expanded cinema. He advocated for an integration of drawing, painting and live performance under the purview of multi-screen presentations; beyond the customary frame of movie display.

Beyond the Cartoon challenges the normative boundaries between conventional cartoon animation, contemporary fine art, and everyday life. The exhibition aims to further our understanding of cartoons, their aesthetics, and their far-reaching impact on our perception of the world today.

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Rhys Coren (b. 1983, Plymouth, UK) currently lives and works in London. He received his BA from the University of West England, Bristol in 2006, and his MA from the Royal Academy Schools, London in 2016. Coren had solo and two person exhibitions throughout the UK and has participated in group shows in China, Denmark, France, Greece, Mexico and the US.

Stephen Felton (b. 1975, Buffalo, NY) lives and works in New York. He studied at the San Francisco Art Institute and the Massachusetts College of Art. Since 2014 Felton has been exhibited in several spaces across Europe including Valentin, Paris, Le Confort Modern in Poitiers, France, Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain in Geneva, Frutta in Rome, and Sifnos, Greece. The latter exhibition was curated by ARTUNER at the end of its inaugural artist's residency programme in the summer of 2015.

Andy Holden (b.1982) was born in Bedfordshire, UK where he continues to live and work today. He received his BA from Goldsmiths College, London in 2005. Holden is a 2011 Stanley Picker Fellow and has had work featured at the Tate Britain, Glasgow International, Cubitt Gallery in London, Whitechapel Gallery in London, Kunsthalle Winterthur, and the Zabłudowicz Collection in London. He won the Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award in 2012 and the Boise Travel Award in 2008.

Jeff Keen (b. 1923, Wiltshire, UK - d. 2012, Brighton, UK) gained an Oxford scholarship, but could not attend due to his national service in 1942. After the war, Keen studied at a small arts college in London's Chelsea. He was an influential participant of important counter culture movements such as the 1960s Happenings and Beat Poetry alongside Allan Ginsberg and William Burroughs, the latter also being a contributor to some of Keen's works. The artist invented the Expanded Cinema events which were comprised of touring film shows, poetry readings and performances. A revolutionary filmmaker, poet, and artist he has exhibited all over the world including prestigious institutions such as Tate Britain and the Hayward Gallery in London, as well as the Centre Pompidou in Paris.

Rachel Maclean (b.1987 in Edinburgh, UK) who lives and works in Glasgow, UK received her BA from Edinburgh College of Art in 2009. She received the Glasgow Film Festival Margaret Tait Award in 2013 and was shortlisted for the Film London Jarman Award in 2013. Maclean has shown at several institutions including HOME in Manchester, Artpace in Texas, Casino Luxembourg in Luxembourg, Rowing Gallery in London, Zabłudowicz Collection in London, and the Centre for Contemporary Art in Glasgow. The artist will represent Scotland at the 2017 Venice Biennale.

Paulo Nimer Pjota (b. 1988, Sao José do Rio Preto, Brazil) lives and works in Sao Paulo where he moved to at the age of 17 in order to study visual arts. He graduated with a BA from the Centro Universitário Belas Artes. in 2010. His work has been shown around the world including at Paço das Artes, Sao Paulo and Mendes Wood DM in Brazil, the Astrup Fearnley in Norway, Kunsthal KAdE in Holland, DHC/Art Foundation for Contemporary Art in Canada, the MAC-Lyon in France and Maureen Paley in London.

Rose Wylie RA (b. 1934) was born in Kent, UK where she continues to live and work today. She received her degree from Folkestone and Dover School of Art, as well as the Royal College of Art in London. Wylie represented Great Britain in Women to Watch, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D.C. in 2010. Her first retrospective was held at Jerwood Gallery, Hastings in 2012 and was followed by her BP spotlight exhibition at Tate Britain in 2013. In 2011 she was given the Paul Hamlyn Award and in 2014 she won the John Moores Painting Prize. She was awarded the Charles Wollaston Prize in 2015 for most distinguished work in the Summer Exhibition following her election as a Royal Academician.

For press inquiries or further information, please contact Cassina Projects at info@cassinaprojects.com or +1 (212) 242-0444

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Image: Jeff Keen, *Babyjelly Fragments* (detail), c. 1965, Watercolour & paper collage, 16x11.5 in | 41x29 cm

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