

# GAGOSIAN

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## NATHANIEL MARY QUINN

### Hollow and Cut

Opening reception: Wednesday, September 11, 6–8pm

September 11–October 19, 2019

456 North Camden Drive, Beverly Hills

Nathaniel Mary Quinn, *C'mo' and Walk with Me*, 2019, charcoal, gouache, soft pastel, and oil pastel on Coventry vellum paper, 50 × 38 inches (127 × 96.5 cm) © Nathaniel Mary Quinn. Photo: Rob McKeever

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August 7, 2019

*Confronting insecurities and fears, embracing shortcomings, and contending with the burden of one's own identity and truth are of paramount importance for becoming more concretely formed. My current studio practice maintains this endeavor: cutting through, digging out, excavating, laying bare wounds—past and present, temporary and permanent—on the surfaces of paper and canvas.*

—Nathaniel Mary Quinn

Gagosian is pleased to present *Hollow and Cut*, new paintings and works on paper by Nathaniel Mary Quinn. This is his first exhibition with the gallery.

Quinn's composite portraits probe the relationship between perception and memory. He rejects the notion of documentary portraiture; instead of depicting physical likeness, he illuminates

subconscious aspects of the human psyche, coaxing forth manifestations of innate and repressed emotions.

While Quinn's portraits might resemble collages, they are actually rendered by hand with oil paint, charcoal, gouache, oil stick, pastels, and gold leaf. He begins with a vision—a vague flash of a face from his past—that he feels viscerally compelled to translate into reality. To do so, he collects images from fashion magazines, newspapers, advertising, and comics, reconceptualizing the snippets as purely aesthetic imagery before methodically redrawing and repainting each one. In an impulse akin to the parlor game *cadavre exquis*, Quinn covers parts of his own composition with construction paper as he goes, so that no existing section influences the appearance of the next. Only when the work is complete does he remove the paper—revealing a visually disjointed yet psychologically unified portrait or figure whose genesis echoes the extemporaneity of human memory.

On view will be a number of Quinn's "enhanced performance" drawings: 12-by-9-inch charcoal-on-paper works created simultaneously with both hands and "enhanced" with colorful swipes and swaths of gouache and soft pastels. For the ambidextrous Quinn, the technique behind these works is a full-body performance in itself that expands upon his already spontaneous act of rendering visions—yet the end result is surprisingly representational. Depicting complete faces rather than patchwork body parts, these haunting portraits slip in and out of focus through a murky haze of black charcoal.

*Hollow and Cut* will also feature new paintings, including Quinn's second ever horizontal diptych, *Jekyll and Hyde* (2019), in which he dramatizes the process of visual fragmentation and reassembly by painting each half of the subject's head separately before joining the two canvases. The strips of bare linen around the edges of each painting also emphasize this three-dimensionality and physicality. Using further perspectival sleight of hand, Quinn then paints the newly constricted edges of the work in a darker, shadowlike gradient, as if framing his portraits through an inset window. Confined within the world of the canvas, his swirling, distorted faces gaze out at us with raw emotion, baring their psychic vulnerabilities.

**Nathaniel Mary Quinn** was born in Chicago in 1977, and lives and works in New York. Collections include the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Brooklyn Museum, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; and Art Institute of Chicago. Quinn's first solo museum exhibition, *This is Life*, was presented at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, WI, from December 2018 to March 2019.

#NathanielMaryQuinn

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## Press

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