

DAVID KORDANSKY GALLERY

David Kordansky Gallery Los Angeles is pleased to present Metal Plastic Paint, an exhibition of new sculptures by Aaron Curry, on view from September 17 through October 22, 2022. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, September 17 from 6 to 8 PM.

In new aluminum sculptures rendered at both medium and large scales, Curry continues to investigate the spatial and material tensions between artistic mediums and modes of mark-making. While certain components of these objects—the abstract shapes they contain, as well as their rivets and other details of their industrial construction—invite associations with modernist public sculptures by Alexander Calder, their aluminum fabrication preserves a delicate sense of Curry’s hand, paradoxically evoking the immediacy of painting or the handcrafted aesthetic qualities of wooden sculpture. These works originate as drawings in Curry’s sketchbook; the sketches are then rendered digitally and constructed as paper maquettes. These alchemical transformations allow the artist to maintain the warm, idiosyncratic presence of his gestures in a fixed and durable metallic material—freezing them, Medusa-like, in painted aluminum.

If Curry’s substantial aluminum sculptures reflect the monumental proportions of mid-century municipal sculpture, in contrast, six sculptures installed on pedestals in the West gallery shift to a more human scale, foregrounding a surreal, seemingly improvised compositional flair. The biomorphism of their organic forms and irregular shapes is infused with humor and irony, subverting and subtly critiquing modernism’s austere, formalist sensibilities.

Curry’s use of color also contributes significantly to this pervasive sense of critical playfulness. Each of the six pedestal-based sculptures establishes a striking contrast between two or three colors, often juxtaposing pastels and jewel tones: matte pink and sharp turquoise, muted periwinkle and eggplant purple, heather gray and citrus-hued

orange. These contrasts are both chromatic and material—the sculptures’ aluminum components are painted in more muted pastels, while bolder, more saturated colors appear as drooping lumps or spheres of plastic that perch upon or dangle from the aluminum constructions like birds on a wire.

Curry has long used his own signature as a way of both paying homage to and poking fun at modernism and its heroic aspirations, self-reflectively considering his own proximity to—and distance from—art historical narratives about authority and the longstanding posturing of “great,” mostly white male modern artists. Here, the signatures—often executed in three dimensions—appear in a variety of unconventional forms: “A. Curry” scrawled in the negative space within a cluster of scribbled lines cast in aluminum; the letters “AC” rendered as gray bubble letters hanging from a length of pink chain. Such unexpected flourishes reposition the artist’s signature—historically a marker of authenticity and value—as a winking joke or kitschy trinket, but they also become spaces for formal experimentation where Curry’s interests in subverting expectations about space, volume, and flatness find complex new expressions.

Two new large-scale aluminum sculptures are also installed in the gallery’s courtyard, providing an opportunity for Curry to address the variable conditions of an outdoor context, not to mention the relationship between public spaces and images in the public imagination. The improvisatory origins of their forms take on particular meaning in settings where light and other conditions are themselves inherently unpredictable. Despite their monumentality, the sculptures are accessible and approachable, their sci-fi-infused otherworldliness tempered by a down-to-earth compositional sense that establishes connections with viewers on physical, intellectual, and intuitive terms alike.

For two decades, Curry has foregrounded such connectedness by posing questions about where visual art resides in contemporary culture. Rather than deny its place in the

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museum, gallery, or art history book, however, he has shown how these spaces are permeable to any number of other influences—including movies, cartoons, underground comics, video games, and regional symbols—and how art's form, as well as its content, can change as a result. The new sculptures on view in this exhibition exemplify the ways in which Curry brings an awareness of this expanded field to each stage of his process; the breadth of their reach is matched only by the unmistakable and idiosyncratic nature of his vocabulary and his material touch.

Aaron Curry has presented solo exhibitions at the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, Massachusetts (2017–2021); McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, Texas (2019); STPI Creative Workshop & Gallery, Singapore (2018); Bass Museum of Art, Miami (2018); Rubell Museum, Miami (2014); CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, France (2014); Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, New York (2013); and High Museum of Art, Atlanta (2012). His work has been included in group exhibitions at Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2021); de la Cruz Collection, Miami (2019); and Jing'an Sculpture Park, Shanghai (2018). Curry's work is in the permanent collections of the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Minneapolis Institute of Art; Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and Seattle Art Museum, among many other institutions. Curry lives and works in Los Angeles.