

DEREK ELLER GALLERY

HENRY GUNDERSON

It's a Great Time to be Alive

January 4 - February 2, 2020

Opening Reception: Saturday, January 4, 6-8pm



Derek Eller Gallery is pleased to present *It's a Great Time to be Alive* a solo exhibition of new paintings by Henry Gunderson featuring seven idiosyncratic subjects which depict the nature of human perception and experience along with the commodification of human identity.

Gunderson's self-portrait, "*It's Hard to See from Where I'm Standing*", depicts multiple iterations of himself organized in a receding pattern. In each photo-realistic image of himself, his eyes are covered by the feet of the next image. With a distressed surface reminiscent of a vintage record, this painting serves as the album cover for the exhibition, and the individual tracks follow.

Accentuating the commercialization of diversity, a group portrait of shiny plastic American Girl dolls represents the spectrum of ethnicities and abilities and their archetypal portrayal in American media. Two works incorporating butterflies juxtapose this symbol of transformation and beauty with imagery from pulp western illustrations; once rough and masculine cowboys are rendered in garish make up and drag. A pair of hyper-masculine paunchy wrestlers are scissored together in an unexpected arrangement. An intimate study of high-tech motorcycle gloves, patchworked with an array of sewn panels, become a highly fetishized commercial product.

Simultaneously humorous, uncanny, disturbing, and painstakingly accurate, Gunderson's seemingly incongruous works proffer a series of rhetorical viewpoints without providing definitive answers. Resonating from the recesses of the collective unconscious, they are meditations on and alterations to the image-saturated culture that is increasingly ingrained in the human psyche.

Henry Gunderson (b.1990) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. Gunderson has had solo exhibitions at Loyal Gallery, Stockholm, Carl Kostyal Gallery, London, Ever Gold Gallery, San Francisco, and 247365, New York. He has been included in group shows at James Fuentes, New York, and Jessica Silverman, San Francisco, among others. This will be his first show at Derek Eller Gallery.

Image caption:

Henry Gunderson, *It's Hard to See from Where I Am Standing*, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 72x72 inches