

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MARNIE WEBER & JIM SHAW**



**20 APRIL – 24 JULY 2022  
SQUERO CASTELLO, VENICE**

Simon Lee Gallery and Zuecca Projects are pleased to present a joint exhibition of works by Jim Shaw and Marnie Weber at Squero Castello in Venice, Italy. The works of Shaw and Weber span a wide range of artistic media and visual imagery, from the detritus of American culture to the surreal worlds of fantasy and folklore, both drawing from the subconscious as their source of artistic creativity. In parallel with the theme of *The Milk of Dreams*, the 59<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, both Shaw and Weber transform the personal, the commonplace and the uncanny into dream-like narratives and magical worlds that unfold the mysteries of our subconscious and imagination.

Jim Shaw and Marnie Weber grew up in the booming economic landscape of post-war America. In the 1970s both artists began creating character-driven works inspired in part by this culture of abundance. In 1972, Shaw moved to Los Angeles where he attended CalArts with Mike Kelley, forming a band called 'Destroy All Monsters'. By the same token, Weber rose to prominence in the Los Angeles punk music and performance scene in the early 1980s, co-founding an art rock band called the 'Party Boys' which then inspired the artist to give countless solo theatrical art rock performances in the late 80s and 90s. At the time, Los Angeles was a hotbed of innovation filled with rock and roll influences that brought a non-traditional edge to both Shaw and Weber's artistic practice.

Shaw is celebrated for the outlandish narratives and sharp wit with which he brings his dystopian, albeit eerily familiar, universe to life. Mining and splicing American histories, cultural refuse of the 20th century, conspiracy magazines, obscure religious iconography, mythologies, children's stories, images from advertising, cartoons and his personal memories and collections, Shaw's seductive, darkly comic works invite us to reflect on social and economic power systems and subjugation. The works in this exhibition showcase Shaw's continuous commentary on the grotesque nature of late capitalism in contemporary American society. *One Percent for Art* (2020) highlights the art world's tolerance for inequity, and the increasing inaccessibility of culture to those of a lower socio-economic bracket – the irony of the artist's own participation in what he perceives as a poisonous art world system that predicates cultural access on status and riches.

Weber's practice, which spans performance, video, sculpture, music, costume and collage, is positioned at the junction of reality and fantasy. Referencing folklore, fairy tales and myths deeply embedded in our collective memory, as seen in *The Wandering Wind* (2015), Weber creates dream-like tableaux set in realms unfixed in time. Blending the carnivalesque, the bacchanalian, the mystical and the absurd, she creates uncanny worlds that invite viewers to an exploration of the subconscious. The darkness of Weber's vision can be seen to lie in the precarious relationship between her parable-like aesthetic and her overtly adult subject matter: sex, drugs and death. Through these works, Weber has developed a series of psychologically-charged, neo-gothic fairytales. Her unearthly narratives synthesise divergent aesthetic tropes into coherent, unified compositions.

This exhibition marks the Los Angeles and Connecticut-based artist couple's first time presenting their works together in Europe. Shaw's monsters, superheroes and villains, whether real or fictional, are larger than life and ultimately convey a sense of vicissitude that is reflective of the world's ever-shifting socio-political landscape. Disorienting and mysterious, Weber's pictorial tropes of anthropomorphised forms and the relationship between animals and human appropriation place women in positions of power and primacy. Thus, the exhibition brings together the uncanny narrative of both artists through their depiction of alternate realities.

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### About Jim Shaw

Born in 1952 in Midland, MI, Jim Shaw lives and works in Los Angeles, CA and Milford, CT. He received his BFA from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI and an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts, Los Angeles, CA. Shaw's work has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions and projects, including Metro Pictures, New York, NY (2021); Simon Lee Gallery, London, UK (2020); The Broad Art Museum at MSU, Michigan, MI (2018); Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles, CA (2017); The New Museum, New York, NY (2016); MASS MoCA, West Adams, MA (2015); Centre Dürrenmatt, Neuchâtel, Switzerland (2014); Chalet Society, Paris, France (2013); LACMA, Los Angeles, CA (2012); BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK (2012); CAPC, Musée de'Art Contemporain de Bordeaux, France (2010); MoMA PS1, New York, NY (2007) and MAGASIN, Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble, Grenoble, France (2003). Major group exhibitions include National Gallery Victoria, Melbourne, Australia (2020); Parrish Art Museum, Water Mill, New York, NY (2020); Crystal Bridges, Bentonville, AZ (2019); Met Breuer, New York, NY (2018); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA (2014); The 55th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy (2013); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN (2010); Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY (2008); and Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (2006). His work belongs to major private and public collections including Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia; Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Geneva, Switzerland; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY and Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY.

### About Marnie Weber

Marnie Weber was born in Bridgeport, CT in 1959 and currently lives and works in Los Angeles, CA and Milford, CT. She studied at the University of Southern California and received her BA from the University of California, both in Los Angeles, CA. In February 2022, Weber presented her largest survey exhibition to date, *Unreal Paradise: Collage Works from 1992 - 2022*, at Michael and Noémi Neidorff Art Gallery, Trinity University, San Antonio, TX. In May 2020, she exhibited a major installation titled *The Song of the Sea Witch*, Busan Biennale 2020, Busan, South Korea. Weber's work has been shown internationally to great extent and has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions, including Simon Lee Gallery, Hong Kong (2021); ODD ARK, Los Angeles, CA (2021); Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA (2019); Boone Family Art Gallery, Pasadena City College, Pasadena, CA (2019); MAMCO, Geneva, Switzerland (2016); Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France (2011) and Le Magasin Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble, France (2010). Recent two-person and group exhibitions include Casino Luxembourg - Forum d'art contemporain, Luxembourg (2020) Simon Lee Gallery, New York, NY (2019); Lille3000, Lille, France (2019) and Concordia University, Montreal, Canada (2018). In addition to her work as an artist, Weber has a significant musical career. Originally part of the LA-based band Party Boys, she has subsequently released countless solo albums. Weber is widely known for her art-rock band The Spirit Girls, who are also featured as characters in her films. More recently Weber formed a collaborative noise band F who have a dedicated yet idiosyncratic following in Los Angeles, CA.

**About Zuecca Projects**

Zuecca Projects is a non-profit cultural organisation involved in the conception, creation and development of interdisciplinary projects in the realms of contemporary art, architecture and film. It is a collaborative platform which allows for artists, curators, private and public institutions, galleries and private sector companies to engage and interact to produce cultural projects with world-leading representatives from their respective sectors. Founded in Venice in 2011 by Alessandro Possati, art and architecture projects organized by Zuecca Projects have involved international artists and architects such as the Estate of Christo and Jeanne-Claude (2021), Coldefy architects (2021), Juergen Teller and Elisabeth Von Samsonow (2019), TO Arquitectos (2018), Marina Abramović (2017), Joep/ Atelier Van Lieshout (2016), Slater B. Bradley (2016), John Giorno (2015), Eisenman Architects (2014), Ai Weiwei (2013), Pierre Huyghe (2012), Rirkrit Tiravanija (2012), Ali Kazma and Giuseppe Stampone (2011), among others.

**About Simon Lee Gallery**

Founded in London in 2002, Simon Lee Gallery represents artists of diverse generations whose practices explore a wide range of media, from sculpture and painting to video and photography, and who share a broad interest in an exploration of the conceptual. Aiming to provide a significant international audience for its artists, the gallery also regularly punctuates its programme with historical exhibitions and curated group shows, which present shifts in contemporary art practice and thought, whilst broadening the dialogue with artists outside of the gallery's core programme. In addition to its UK activity, in 2012 the gallery opened a space in Hong Kong, which introduced its artists to a wider public in Asia, with a fully independent programme.

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter: @SimonLeeGallery  
[www.simonleegallery.com](http://www.simonleegallery.com)

Images: Marnie Weber, *The Waterfall of Forevermore*, 2013. Collage and acrylic paint on panel, 167.6 x 91.4 x 6.4 cm (66 x 36 x 2 1/2 in.); Jim Shaw, *Official Portrait (Hospital Bed)*, 2019. Acrylic on muslin, 101.6 x 76.2 cm (40 x 30 in.) All images courtesy the artist and Simon Lee Gallery.

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