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On View

Artist Jim Shaw Unleashes a Dystopian, Dantesque Vision of American Politics in a New Show in London—See Images Here

Jim Shaw reveals an ominous vision of America in his latest paintings at Simon Lee Gallery in London.

Caroline Goldstein, October 28, 2020



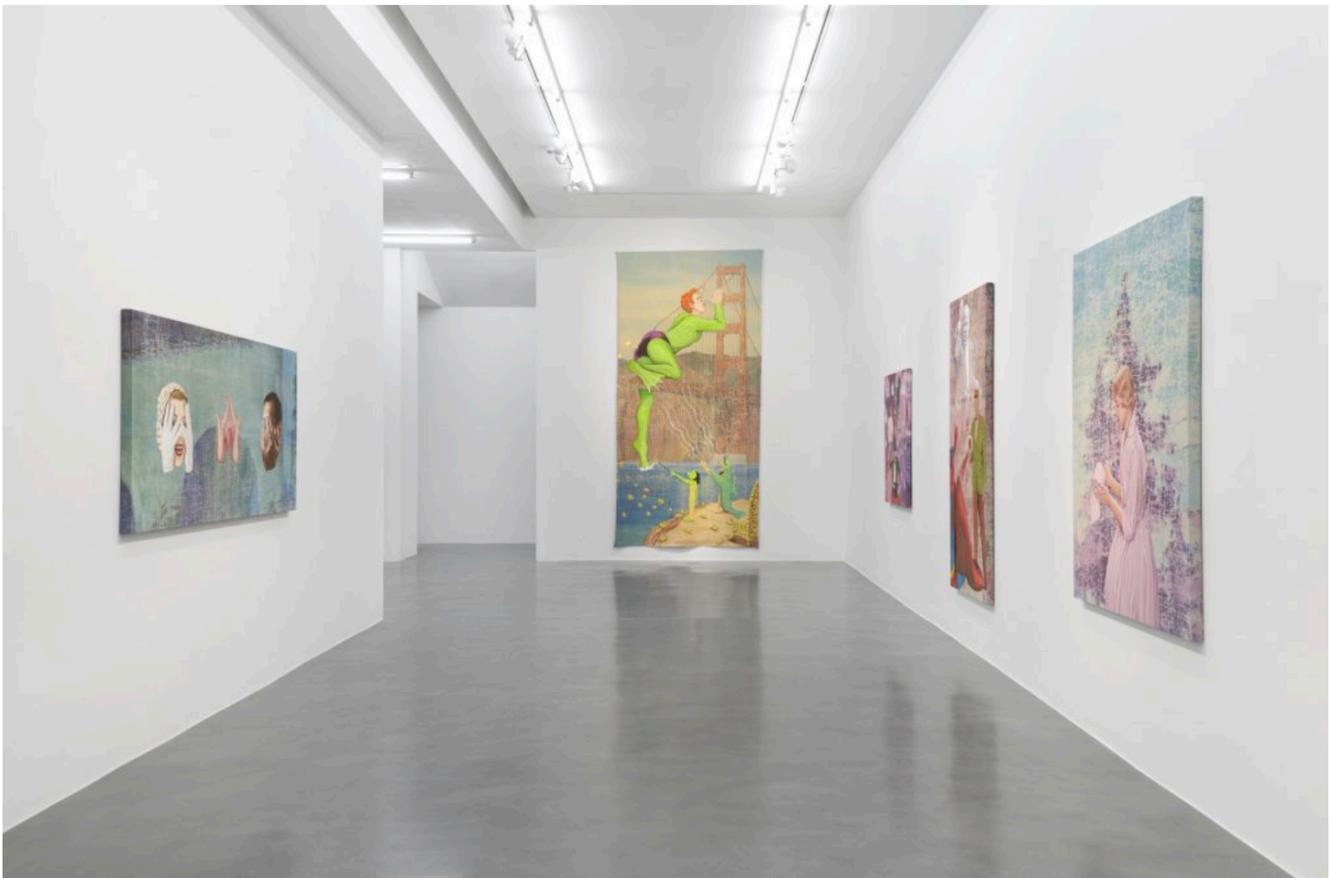
Jim Shaw, *The Master Mason* (2020). Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery.

“Jim Shaw: Hope Against Hope” at Simon Lee Gallery Through January 16, 2021

What the gallery says: “Shaw has never been one to shy away from provocation: the artist boldly imagines Donald J. Trump, President of the United States, and his wife, Melania, descending an escalator into Dante’s Ninth Circle of Hell to find a group of traitors, some of them discarded former aides, frozen alongside Satan in a sea of ice. Shaw’s monsters and villains, whether real or fictional, are larger than life; ultimately, these paintings convey a sense of vicissitude that is reflective of the country’s ever-shifting sociopolitical landscape.”

Why it’s worth a look: With less than a week until election day in the United States, Los Angeles-based artist Jim Shaw has conjured a fantastical landscape awash with trolls and antiheroes, many targeted at Donald Trump and his cronies. Shaw is a collector of images from bygone phases of American life, and he disperses them like Easter eggs in his raucous, cutting works, marrying them to more contemporary images.

In works like *One Percent for Art*, Shaw lampoons the upper crust of society with a Calder-esque sculpture that functions as either a wig rack or a head-skewering pike—or maybe both—while a small gladiator stands at the ready to fight the multi-headed creature, which looks to be an impossible task.



Installation view, “Jim Shaw: Hope Against Hope” at Simon Lee Gallery, London. Photo: Ben Westoby.



Jim Shaw, *One Percent For Art* (2020). Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery.



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Jim Shaw, *Jimmie Olsen Vs The Goddess Of Reason* (2020). Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery.



Installation view, "Jim Shaw: Hope Against Hope" at Simon Lee Gallery, London. Photo: Ben Westoby.



Installation view, "Jim Shaw: Hope Against Hope" at Simon Lee Gallery, London. Photo: Ben Westoby.



Jim Shaw, *The Master Mason* (2020). Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery.



Jim Shaw, *Pandora's Box* (2020). Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery.



Installation view, "Jim Shaw: Hope Against Hope" at Simon Lee Gallery, London. Photo: Ben Westoby.



Jim Shaw, *Donald and Melania Trump descending the escalator into the 9th circle of hell reserved for traitors frozen in a sea of ice*, (2020). Courtesy of the artist and Simon Lee Gallery.