

Billy Childish

*remember all the
high and exalted things
remember all the low
and broken things*

January 23—February 22, 2020

536 West 22nd Street, New York

#BillyChildish | @lehmannmaupin

Opening reception: Thursday, January 23, 6 to 8 PM



Billy Childish, *cave*, 2019. Oil and charcoal on linen, 108.27 x 72.05 inches (275 x 183 cm). Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul.

New York, January 3, 2020 — Lehmann Maupin is pleased to announce an exhibition of new paintings by Billy Childish. The prolific British artist, musician, and writer has produced hundreds of albums and dozens of volumes of fiction and poetry. For his fifth exhibition with the gallery Childish has created a body of work emblematic of his “radical traditionalist” approach. Pulling from themes found throughout art history—the bather, a lone figure in a landscape, a sunset—Childish presents intensely personal vignettes that feel archetypal, vibrating with the kinetic energy of a moment lived. The gallery will host an opening reception on Thursday, January 23, from 6 to 8 PM at 536 West 22nd Street.

While working in a state of flow is essential to the creative process of any artist, for Childish this state represents the entirety of artistic production. Working intuitively and quickly, most of his highly gestural paintings are created in a single session without any revision. Childish is also an adept woodblock printer and he produces satirical and activist imagery with his London art cooperative, L-13 Light Industrial Workshop. His material

approach to printmaking extends to Childish’s painting practice where color and line are emphasized through a flattening of each composition. His style is often compared to the expressionist painters of the early 20th century, such as Vincent Van Gogh, Kurt Schwitters, or Edvard Munch, however, for Childish, it is the embodiment of these artists’ roles within society that is most compelling. An unabashed universalist, Childish considers artistry to be the inheritance of every human being, a method to capture the expressive impulse and visualize the powerful lure of beauty.

Utterly unironic and vividly familiar, a Childish painting can be interpreted the way one might interpret a dream. In one painting, a woman swimming underwater may represent the unconscious, while in another

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painting, a woman wading out to a cave could represent the dark entry into the unknown. For the artist, the conceptual should never replace the humanistic—Childish states “I make a picture in the same way a child does—something ‘out there’ interests me. Making a painting of that ‘something’ then joins me with the universal creator/creation in a more intent way than just being an observer.”

About the artist

Billy Childish (b. 1959, Chatham, Kent, United Kingdom; lives and works in Whitstable, Kent) attended Medway College of Design, Kent in 1977 and Saint Martin’s School of Art, London in 1978. Solo exhibitions of his work have been organized at Rochester Art Gallery, Kent, United Kingdom (2016); Opelvillen Rüsselsheim, Frankfurt, Germany (2016); White Columns, New York (2010); and the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, United Kingdom (2010). Select group exhibitions featuring his work include BILLY CHILDISH, HARRY ADAMS and EDGEWORTH JOHNSTONE: Our Friend Larionov, Pushkin House, London, United Kingdom (2014); Paintings Sweet Paintings, Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aache, Germany (2014); and British Art Show 5, City Art Centre, Edinburgh, Scotland (2000). Childish has written and published five novels and more than 40 volumes of confessional poetry, and recorded more than 150 LPs.

About Lehmann Maupin

Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin founded Lehmann Maupin in 1996. The gallery represents a diverse range of American artists, as well as artists and estates from across Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, and the Middle East. It has been instrumental in introducing numerous artists from around the world in their first New York exhibitions. Known for championing artists who create groundbreaking and challenging forms of visual expression, the gallery prioritizes personal investigations and individual narratives. Lehmann Maupin prizes the distinct conceptual approaches that its artists offer on the essential matters that shape international culture today, including gender, class, religion, history, politics, and globalism. In 2013, with two locations in New York, significant interest in its artists abroad, and growing opportunities in new markets, Lehmann Maupin opened an additional location in Hong Kong, followed by Seoul in 2017. For more information on the gallery and its artists, visit www.lehmannmaupin.com.

Current & Upcoming Exhibitions

Lee Bul, *Interlude: Perdu*, November 7 - January 18, 536 West 22nd Street, NEW YORK

Helen Pashgian, November 12 - February 29, HONG KONG

Helen Pashgian, November 14 - February 29, SEOUL

Erwin Wurm, *Yes Biological*, January 16 - February 22, 2020, 501 West 24th Street, NEW YORK

For more information on Billy Childish or other Lehmann Maupin artists, please contact Sarah Levine +1 212 255 2923 or communications@lehmannmaupin.com

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