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Hugo McCloud

*As For Now*

Sean Kelly, New York

May 11 – June 22, 2024

Opening reception: Friday, May 10, 6-8pm

Sean Kelly is delighted to announce *As For Now*, Hugo McCloud's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery. Marking a shift in his methodology, McCloud revisits earlier bodies of work armed with a deeper understanding of the materials he employs and how they interact, as well as new insights informed by recent life experiences. He reinterrogates these materials and subject matters, exploring how past events have transformed both him and his artistic process. Occupying the front and main galleries, the exhibition presents new works from his signature plastic and tar stamped painting series, highlighting his fluid movement between figuration and abstraction. There will be an opening reception on Friday, May 10, 6-8 pm. The artist will be present.

At its core, the exhibition represents a departure from previous presentations which drew inspiration from external experiences and shifts towards a more inward-looking examination of self, process, and materiality. McCloud's abstract stamped paintings combine unconventional industrial materials such as aluminum sheeting, silver aluminum butane paint, and black liquid tar on tar paper with traditional pigments and woodblock printing techniques. Transitioning from the elaborate ornamentation of previous works in this series, McCloud has simplified the design to a single, minimal repeating shape. Streamlining this process has allowed for a repetitive, though more nuanced, intuitive approach. This change reflects a newfound confidence in his artistic vision, prompting him to question the necessity of each

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element within the composition. McCloud also embraces a more vibrant palette inspired by his time in Mexico.

As McCloud revisits his *Burdened Man* series, he finds himself more personally connected to the imagery, seeing his reflection in carrying the burden of life's experiences within the works. Despite the meticulous and exacting creative process – using hundreds, even thousands, of small cut-out pieces of single use plastic to “paint” the compositions – these new figurative works incorporate abstract elements, embracing a sense of freedom in his approach to representational imagery. McCloud's flower series, on view in the front gallery, were initially begun as a daily meditative practice during the pandemic to document the passage of time. The works are constructed of single-use plastic with oil paint to accentuate the blossoms. There are also watercolors on the wax paper McCloud uses in the fabrication of his plastic paintings.

As with all of McCloud's oeuvre, material regeneration is a prevalent connection within his work. His ability to elevate industrial elements into fine art materials is consistent throughout the exhibition, serving as a linear narrative that underscores his dedication to pushing boundaries and exploring the breadth of his creativity.

Hugo McCloud lives and works in Los Angeles. His work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, Connecticut, The Arts Club, London, and Fondazione 107, in Turin, Italy. He has also been featured in group exhibitions at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, Virginia, the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, and The Drawing Center, New York. His work is in the collections of the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C., the North Carolina Museum of Art, the Detroit Institute of the Arts, The Margulies Collection at the Warehouse, the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, the Brooklyn Museum, the Mott Warsh Collection, and The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection.

For additional information on Hugo McCloud, please visit [skny.com](https://skny.com)

For press, please contact Adair Lentini at [Adair@skny.com](mailto:Adair@skny.com)

For all other inquiries, please contact Lauren Kelly at [Lauren@skny.com](mailto:Lauren@skny.com)