

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Matthew Barney
SECONDARY: object replay
May 16 – July 26, 2024
Reception: May 16, 6pm – 8pm
530 West 21st Street
New York

Gladstone Gallery, Sadie Coles HQ, Regen Projects, and Galerie Max Hetzler are pleased to announce *SECONDARY*, an exhibition in four parts by Matthew Barney. Unfolding sequentially across the galleries, each presentation traces the artist's career-long interest in the relationship between the body, transfiguration, physical possibility, and the deep-rooted history of violence that serves as a cornerstone to the American psyche. In addition to a new series of sculptures and drawings, Barney will premiere his film, *SECONDARY*, in London, Paris, and Los Angeles. Across the installations, Barney re-maps subject matter that has repeatedly circulated within his oeuvre, conflating notions of material potential and myth-making with the specter of entropic collapse.

Each arm of the exhibition traces back to the artist's 2023 film, *SECONDARY*, a five-channel work that draws its inspiration from the infamous 1978 Raiders vs. Patriots game in which defensive back Jack Tatum delivered an open field hit that left wide receiver Darryl Stingley permanently paralyzed. Recalling his own memories of the play, the impact, and the culture of spectacle that continues to inform the incident today, Barney addresses the consequences of a sport that has become synonymous with physical brutality. Moving from pregame to game, from play to impact, and finally arriving at the media's relentless repetition of the collision itself, the exhibitions examine the connective tissue that joins our scopophilic desire to witness lethal force with the anxieties stirred by the vulnerabilities of our own bodies.

Consistent with Barney's practice, the sculptural works in the exhibition trespass from the screen to the gallery, blurring the distance between the artist's constructed cinematic narratives and the corporeal. Comprised of a range of materials that exhibit individual intrinsic behaviors, the objects in *SECONDARY* probe issues of time and aging. Conjuring the limits of the body by using mediums that respectively indicate elasticity (synthetic polymers), strength (cast metals), and fragility (ceramic), Barney both memorializes and pathologizes the Tatum/Stingley event. Also included in each exhibition are a new series of large-scale drawings on aluminum panel, each of which expands upon the motif of the field emblem. Simultaneously diagrammatic and abstract, these drawings examine issues of repetition, memory, and the flux between the symbolic and the real.

For his installation at Gladstone, *SECONDARY: object replay*, the artist offers a series of contemporary meditations on his most familiar forms. Here, his relentless interrogation of interiority is turned outward, and his traditional concerns are complicated by a series of iterative structures that each indicate a personal confrontation with violence. A cast ceramic sculpture titled *Power Rack with Fractured Barbell* evokes both the absent figure and a leitmotif of vulnerability, its broken crossbar and wilting towel suggesting injuries that are both visible and concealed. Created to echo both the internal mechanisms of the body and the subterranean infrastructure of the studio is *Supine Axis*, a segmented ceramic pipe that plastic, surgical scaffolding attempts to hold together. A collapsed net of dumbbells reveals the structure's misgivings. In *Power Rack / Iron Inversion*, Barney continues his tradition of ideating on the relationship between the constructed physique and the readymade, redoubling his examination of the points of contact that join abstraction and figuration.

Additionally, the artist presents *DRAWING RESTRAINT 26*. Executed, filmed and presented in Gladstone's 21st Street gallery, the work is performed as a duet between dancer Raphael Xavier (*SECONDARY*'s Jack Tatum) and Barney (as quarterback Ken Stabler). Half performance and half presentation of trace, the work charts the repeated physical and psychological damage sustained by both players in endless replay. While Tatum's mark-making on the gallery walls is the result of a series of running drills conducted while he impacts a cast clay weight, other gestures belie something more ominous. One of the first NFL players to be diagnosed with Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy, Stabler leaves his imprint with a metal barbell and clay weight attached to his skull.

A solo exhibition featuring new works alongside the video installation, *SECONDARY*, is on view concurrently in Paris at the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain from June 8 to September 8, 2024.

For further information, please contact press@gladstonegallery.com
New York gallery hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-6pm
Brussels gallery hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10am-6pm and Saturday, 12pm-8pm
Seoul gallery hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-6pm