

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

523 West 24th Street, New York, New York 10011 Tel: 212-243-0200 Fax: 212-243-0047

PRESS RELEASE

Nayland Blake #IDrawEveryDay

November 4 – December 22, 2017

Opening: Saturday, November 4, 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Matthew Marks is pleased to announce **Nayland Blake #IDrawEveryDay**, the next exhibition in his gallery at 526 West 22nd Street, featuring one sculpture and over seventy drawings in graphite and colored pencil.

On January 1, 2015, Nayland Blake initiated an assignment to make at least one drawing every day. Drawing had been part of Blake's artistic practice for decades, often in tandem with sculpture, but these daily drawings would become the artist's most diaristic body of work to date. Within a consistent format of twelve by nine inches, the drawings capture a range of moods and themes, but their central concern is gender presentation. Blake has harnessed the medium to create a fantasy body whose changeability is matched by the fluidity of the drawn line, which can exist as words, patterns, imagery, or all three simultaneously.

A banner in one drawing reads "WRITING & DRAWING ARE SISTER ARTS." The phrase, found in a book of nineteenth-century penmanship exercises and recently tattooed across the artist's back, signals a commitment to text and image, as well as the visual influence of vernacular tattoo art. Other inspirations include classic comic strips like George Herriman's *Krazy Kat* and Bud Sagendorf's *Popeye*, old Warner Bros. cartoons, Lynda Barry's illustrated novels, contemporary animated series like *Adventure Time* and *Steven Universe*, and recent autobiographical zine comics. Blake compares the drawings in this exhibition to the visual accumulation on urban walls covered with stickers, signage, and graffiti: "Drawings allow for internal contradiction. They can be something one minute and something else the next."

Blake's drawing are also featured in the exhibition "Trigger: Gender as a Tool and a Weapon," on view at the New Museum in New York through January 21. On the afternoons of November 11, December 1 and 16, and January 13, the museum will host *Crossing Object (inside Gnomes)*, a performance by Blake in character as the "fursona" Gnomes, a friendly bison/bear of unfixed gender.

Nayland Blake (b. 1960) is an interdisciplinary artist living in New York. Blake's work has been shown extensively since 1990, most recently in a one-person exhibition at the David Ireland House in San Francisco. Blake participated in the 1991 Whitney Biennial and the 1993 Venice Biennale, and was awarded a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship in 2012.

Nayland Blake #IDrawEveryDay is on view at 526 West 22nd Street from November 4 to December 22, 2017, Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

For additional information, please contact Jeffrey Peabody at 212-243-0200 or jeffrey@matthewmarks.com.