

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

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

PRESS RELEASE

**What Nerve!
Alternative Figures in American Art, 1960 to Present**

July 8 – August 14, 2015

Opening: Tuesday, July 7, 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Matthew Marks is pleased to announce **What Nerve! Alternative Figures in American Art, 1960 to Present**, the next exhibition in his three 22nd Street galleries.

Focusing on four groups of artists practicing away from the cultural capitals of New York and Los Angeles, **What Nerve!** presents an alternative history of American art since the 1960s. As the exhibition's curator, Dan Nadel, has written, "When confronted with a system that seems impenetrable, outsiders tend to band together."

The Chicago-based Hairy Who exhibited together from 1966 to 1969. Its members were Jim Falconer, Art Green, Gladys Nilsson, Jim Nutt, Suellen Rocca, and Karl Wirsum. Funk Art took root in the San Francisco Bay Area in the 1960s and 1970s and is represented in the exhibition with works by Jeremy Anderson, Robert Arneson, Joan Brown, Roy De Forest, Robert Hudson, Ken Price, Peter Saul, and Peter Voulkos. In Ann Arbor, Mike Kelley, Cary Loren, Niagara, and Jim Shaw formed Destroy All Monsters as students in the 1970s. Forcefield members Mat Brinkman, Jim Drain, Leif Goldberg, and Ara Peterson, active in Providence from 1996 to 2003, created fictional personas complete with pseudonyms and elaborate garments.

This exhibition reassesses the artists associated with these four groups, providing a new understanding of their influence on contemporary art history. Distinct as their artworks are in style, period, and place, the artists all share a common set of concerns. Inspired by a wide array of influences including folk art, advertising, primitive art, comic books, and fetishism, they all favor figurative imagery that diverges from the predominant artistic style of the time.

The groups presented here emerged from close collaboration and, in the case of Destroy All Monsters and Forcefield, experimental living arrangements. All of them embrace alternate aesthetics and unconventional media. Lawn chairs, purses, comic books, chain metal shrouds, and a video installation join rarely seen paintings and drawings.

The Collected Hairy Who Publications 1966 – 1969, the first book to gather the artist's books of the Chicago-based Hairy Who into a single volume, will be published on the occasion of the exhibition. Accompanying it are a scholarly essay and an extensive archive of Hairy Who posters, exhibition photographs, and ephemera.

A version of the exhibition was presented last fall at the RISD Museum in Providence, RI, which was accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with texts by Dan Nadel, Robert Cozzolino, Brian Chippendale, Dominic Molon, Roger Brown, John Smith, Naomi Fry, Michael Rooks, Nicole Rudick, and Judith Tannenbaum.

What Nerve! Alternative Figures in American Art, 1960 to Present will be on view at 502, 522, and 526 West 22nd Street from July 8 through August 14, 2015, Monday through Friday, from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

For further information, please contact Ted Turner at (212) 243-0200 or ted@matthewmarks.com.