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Cherry | Lucic

Matt Morris

A Magician, a Soldier, and Two Figures Watching a Burning Skull

09.17.16

6:30-10:00PM

COMMUNICATION:

09.10.16

Cherry and Lucic is excited to announce: *A Magician, a Soldier, and Two Figures Watching a Burning Skull*, an exhibition of new works by Chicago based artist Matt Morris. An opening reception will be held on September 17, 2016 with private viewings by appointment until October 1, 2016.

In conjunction with this exhibition, Morris will present alongside artists manuel arturo abreu, and bart fitzgerald at *Eat My Body Like It's Holy*, and panel discussion on intersections of queerness, race and religion through the lenses of artistic practice and religious study. Organized by Cherry and Lucic and presented at **Reed College's Eliot Chapel Hall** with the support of the Reed College Art Department and The Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery, the discussion will take place on **September 19 from 5:30-7:00pm**.

Johnson, E. Patrick. "Feeling the Spirit in the Dark: Expanding Notions of the Sacred in the African-American Gay Community." *Callaloo*, Vol. 21, No. 2, Spring 1998.

Calasso, Robert. *Tiepolo Pink*. Knopf, 2011.

Morris, Matt. "a set of hips set among clouds." *Clownflâneur*. Block Museum of Art, 2013.

Calasso, Robert. *Tiepolo Pink*. Knopf, 2011.

Johnson, E. Patrick. "'Square' Studies, or (Almost) Everything I Know about Queer Studies I Learned from My Grandmother." *Black Queer Studies*. Duke University Press, 2007.

Matt Morris (b. 1985, Baton Rouge, LA) is an artist, writer, curator and educator living and working in Chicago, IL. Recent solo projects by Morris include: an installation of works at Permanent.Collection, Austin, TX with Michelle Rawlings; *The Perfect Kiss (QQ)* *questioning queer* at the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati, OH; and *i'm issue, i'm free*, PEREGRINEPROGRAM, Chicago, IL. Morris has recently participated in group exhibitions in Chicago at Shane Campbell Gallery, The Elmhurst Art Museum, The Franklin and Queer Thoughts; as well as: Fjord, in Philadelphia, PA; and the Mary + Leigh Block Museum of Art in Evanston IL. From 2009-2011, Morris co-directed U-Turn Art Space in Cincinnati, exhibiting artists from the Ohio region and beyond. Morris teaches at the School of Art Institute of Chicago and holds an MFA in Art Theory and Practice with a Certificate in Gender and Sexuality Studies from Northwestern University.

My friends and I squeeze down the staircase and descend into the sea of bodies onto the dance floor. There is barely enough room to breathe, let alone move. Every inch of the space is filled with a body—fat bodies, thin bodies, hard bodies, soft bodies, warm bodies, sweaty bodies, every body imaginable. Clearly the body is on display...We hold on to each other for dear life as the beat of the music, the smells of Drakkar, Cool Water, Eternity, and Escape, CK-One, the sweat drenching our shirts and the holy sexual spirit that presides works us into a shamanistic state of euphoria. Time stands still.

Something is going on, something is constantly going on, but no one has been able to pinpoint what it is. The definitions that have been resorted to (necromancy, pyromancy, sacrifices, magi, astrologers, witchcraft) are generic and almost comically in their indifference to establishing what is happening in detail. And nothing enables us to specify unequivocally the relationship between the characters that come and go on the stage.

The building where I stand points outward to the government that erected it, the other governments that stand in contrast to it, and the historical material violent oppressive means by which all of these elements harden into themselves. And within the within there is this tender and blushing and nauseatingly dense and intensely specified mauve sky by Giambattista Tiepolo... Free floating throughout his sky are populations of figureheads progenitors powerhouses governments authorities gods angels figments of multiple cultural imaginations. They crowd at the edges. Not purposeless rococo froth, the fête plays out for, or at least because of, the frame. Festivity and melancholy and the dislocations and detachments which accompany are aggregated into dreamy weather patterns. There are too many pieces to be able to add up properly: multiple perspectives compressed into so seemingly frivolous a view is like pausing a crystal wine glass mid-shatter.

But the scene does not consist only of the fire and the burning head. A helmeted soldier is looking at the fire and pointing in the opposite direction. Something else is happening, something that eludes us. And maybe it explains everything.

I desire a rejoinder to performativity that allows a space for subjectivity, for agency (however momentary and discursively fraught), and, ultimately, for change... People have a need to exercise control over the production of their images so that they feel empowered ...Not until we expose ourselves to one another will we be able to communicate effectively across our differences...It is simultaneously in a state of being *and* becoming.