

TURLEY GALLERY

Montgomery Smith David Woodward *an elegance*

April 6–May 12, 2024

Opening reception Saturday, April 6, 3–5 PM



David Woodward, *Shadows and Light*, 2021, mixed media, 23 x 17.5 inches

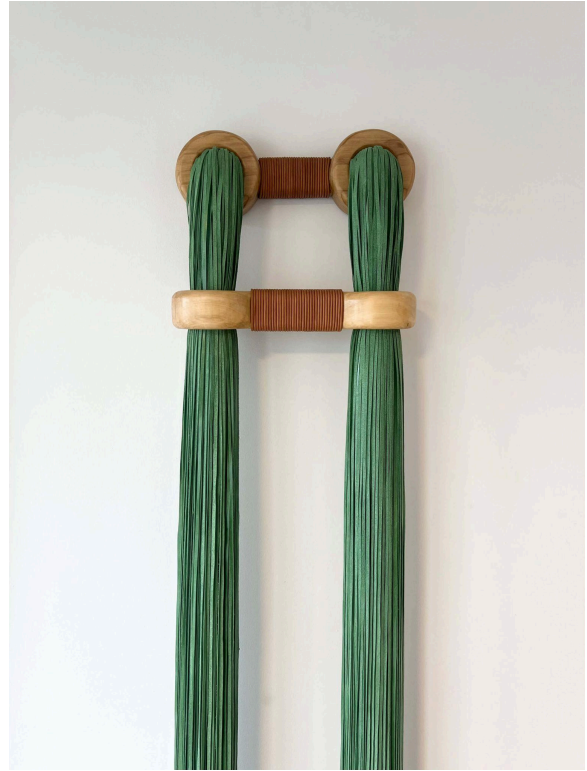
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an elegance cuts and pastes artists Montgomery Smith and David Woodward together through their mastery over materiality. While Woodward literally cuts and pastes imagery together to form intricate works that transcend our understanding of empirical logic, Smith takes forms and materials of the taboo and creates approachable, sculptural works that are soft on our psyches. Together these two explore the macro and micro, inner and outer, minimal and maximal, infinity and beyond.

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Montgomery Smith, *cream*, 2023,
hand-cut leather and wood, 37 x 7 x 3.75 inches



Montgomery Smith, *Hulking*, 2024,
hand-cut leather and wood, 82 x 12 x 4.75 inches

Montgomery Smith

This new series of hand-cut leather sculptures are a contrast to my over embellished past works. I've reclaimed several whole cowhides from the footwear/garment industry, and cut them bit by bit into cascades. The slow process is very meditative for me—using only a pair of sharpened scissors.

I've worked closely with my father to fabricate custom wood “frames” for each bundle. He's always encouraged me to explore handcrafted projects, some of my earliest memories being trips to the Tandy Leather store in Fort Worth, Texas. After the leather is mounted, the end result is almost trophy-like, a delicate memento to the life and time that goes into tanning leather.

Montgomery Perry Smith is a Brooklyn-based sculpture artist. He received his BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2008 with a focus in Fiber and Material Studies. Smith was a resident at the Fire Island Artist Residency during the summer of 2018 and has been closely connected with New York's queer art community since. Smith debuted a series of hand-cut leather sculptures at Chicago's LVL3 Gallery in 2023.

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David Woodward, *Wheel of Fortune*, 2022, mixed media, 22 x 17 inches

The work shown at Turley Gallery is a continuation of this series, further exploring scale, material and color. Smith has performed as the drag queen Patti Spliff since 2012, and often blurs the line between his fine art practice and drag world.

David Woodward

In my practice, I utilize the medium of collage to find pathways between seemingly disparate visuals and sources, with the aim of depicting everyday subjects that belie a more complex understanding of the exterior world. By repurposing familiar visuals into recognizable but unrelated forms that might function as vessels for individual association, I am interested in exploring relationships between the micro and macro, and the often unexplainable effects of each upon the other.

Weaving personal elements of queer identity into a broader visual narrative that reflects on the intersections between individual and communal experience, I aim to explore ideas of interconnectedness, duality, and metamorphosis. Much like the daily queer experience, my collage practice is tasked with constructing alternative blueprints, frameworks, and possibilities from the same fragmented materials encountered by everybody else.

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Using imagery gleaned from used books and magazines about the environment, astronomy, horticulture, and design, my work reflects a composite visual world of figures, spaces, and iconography built from anachronistic fragments of the past. Cutouts of photographic imagery are divorced from their original contexts and matched with unrelated forms and shapes—a bowl cut from the side of a mountain, planchette cut from a bird's plumage, or foliage cut from aerial photos of an oil spill.

This optical interplay between imagery and form relates to my ongoing exploration of 'pareidolia' (the tendency to see meaningful images in random visuals, such as shapes in the clouds) and more broadly—to my interest in the human impulse to view our world in ways that transcend logical and physical confines.

David Woodward is a Tkaronto/Toronto-based artist working predominantly in analog, paper collage using found media from used books and magazines. Since graduating from the Fine Art and Art History programs at Queen's University (2013) their work has been exhibited in Canada and abroad in group and solo exhibitions. David has received project grants from the Toronto and Ontario Arts Councils, as well as two Research and Creation Grants from the Canada Council for the Arts (2019, 2023) to support their practice. Recent projects include *Ripened Off the Vine*, a solo-exhibition at Artscape Daniels Spectrum (Toronto, 2022), and *Stone Fruit* (2023), a risograph-printed artist's book and follow-up to their 2017 release *Faded by the Sun*. Both publications serve as intimate chronicles of collaged details, scenes and spaces that run parallel to David's broader body of work.

Turley Gallery is open Friday–Sunday, 12–5 PM, and by appointment.

For press and sales inquiries, please email info@turley.gallery.