

# MITCHELL-INNES & NASH

## MARTIN KERSELS: *Cover Story*

534 West 26<sup>th</sup> Street, New York

April 11 – May 18, 2019

Opening Reception: Thursday, April 11 from 6 to 8 PM



**NEW YORK, March 29, 2019** – Mitchell-Innes & Nash is pleased to present *Cover Story*, a solo exhibition of new work by Martin Kersels. On view at the gallery’s Chelsea location, this will be the artist’s second solo show with Mitchell-Innes & Nash and will feature a series of new sculptural wall pieces.

Assembled largely with wood and found LP record sleeves, the works on view in *Cover Story* explore an aesthetic strategy that Kersels calls “materially limited bricolage.”

Sharing in the visual and conceptual legacy of H.C. Westermann, Martin Kersels also draws influences from French new realists like Jacques Villeglé and Jean Tinguely, as well as from Dadaist collagists Kurt Schwitters and

Hannah Hoch. Like his predecessors, Kersels’s work strives for an aura of immediacy, shunning the eternal timelessness that is often sought in more traditional modes of art like oil painting or bronze sculpture. With this exhibition, the artist seeks to engage with the “near finite”—that is to say, the immediate world around us in both temporal and spatial terms. Kersels makes a point to note that the size of the LPs correspond directly to the allowable runtime of the music recorded, highlighting the compression of time and space inherent in a vinyl recording.

In making this body of work, Kersels was also interested in “breaking the stillness” and several pieces in the exhibition feature an internal motor that powers a moving component. In *The Love Hours (for Mike Kelley)*, for instance, the artist has incorporated a rotating dial, not unlike a tonearm on a record player or a clock hand, which reveals a cutout of an eye as it turns. Eyes play a significant role in the visual lexicon of Kersels’s recent work; they offer up moments of reflection and the artist has likened the imagery on LP sleeves to portraits or mirrors- ones that allow the viewer to “pour their own thoughts and emotions into it.”

*Cover Story* will be accompanied by a new performance piece by the artist in which, dressed in costume, Kersels will activate the site-specific stage at the center of the gallery space with a three-song aural collage. Performances will take place at the opening reception and again on Saturday, May 4 at 2:30 PM.

### About Martin Kersels

Martin Kersels’s performative practice spans sculpture, photography, installation and action. A true polystylist, Kersels is interested in pushing themes of scale, tension and the effects of gravity into more conceptual directions, injecting a playfulness in his work which reveals the awkwardness associated with not belonging. Born in 1960 in Los Angeles, Martin Kersels currently lives and works in New Haven, Connecticut. He received his BA and MFA from UCLA in 1984 and 1995, respectively. From 1984 to 1993, Kersels participated in collaborative performances with SHRIMPS, an alternative performance art group associated with artful maladroit actions that he co-founded.

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His objects and projects have been the subject of major solo and group exhibitions, including the Whitney Biennial (1997, 2010); *XXXXXXXXXO* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2013); *Charms (Black Cloud/Green Dog/Little, Little Boy/White House/Silver Clouds)* at Santa Barbara Museum of Art (2012); *Tumble Room* at Museum Tinguely, Basel (2010); *Heavyweight Champion* at Tang Museum, Saratoga Springs (2007) and Santa Monica Museum of Art (2008); *Disorderly Conduct* at Orange County Museum of Art (2008); *100 Artists See God* at Institute of Contemporary Art, London (2005). Other important exhibitions of Kersels's work have been held at Fondazione Prada, Milan; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Kunsthalle Bern, Bern; Musée d'Art Contemporain, Marseille; Musée Cantonal des Beaux Arts, Lausanne; Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver; Renwick Gallery at the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C.; and Swiss Institute for Contemporary Art, New York, among others.

His work is held in public collections at major institutions worldwide, including Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona; Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica; Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami; Fonds national d'art contemporain, Paris; and Centre national des arts plastiques, Paris.

## About Mitchell-Innes & Nash

Founded by Lucy Mitchell-Innes and David Nash, Mitchell-Innes & Nash places exemplary contemporary artists within a historical context, revealing a continuity of ideas and aesthetic virtuosity from the Modern era through the present day.

Mitchell-Innes & Nash's renowned exhibition program, in both their Madison Avenue and Chelsea locations, fosters excellence within artistic practice, while forging an informed dialogue between emerging and internationally recognized artists. From acclaimed surveys of 20<sup>th</sup>-century masters, such as Jean Arp, Anthony Caro, Jay DeFeo, Willem de Kooning, Leon Kossoff, Kenneth Noland, Roy Lichtenstein, and Nicolas de Stael, to solo exhibitions of Pope.L, Martha Rosler, and Jessica Stockholder, Mitchell-Innes & Nash has proven expertise in both advancing the careers of emerging artists and maintaining the superior standard set by established artists.

Caption: MARTIN KERSELS, *Stand By Your Man*, 2019, wood and LP sleeves

© Martin Kersels / Courtesy of the artist and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York

## Listings Information:

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