

Matthew Barney

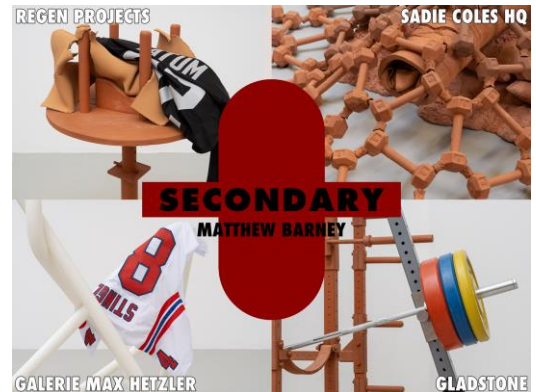
SECONDARY: light lens parallax

62 Kingly Street London W1

24 May – 27 July 2024

Private view: Friday 24 May, 6-8pm

Gladstone Gallery, Sadie Coles HQ, Regen Projects, and Galerie Max Hetzler are pleased to announce *SECONDARY*, an exhibition in four parts by Matthew Barney. Unfolding sequentially across the galleries and staged in concert with an installation at the Fondation Cartier, each presentation traces the artist's career-long interest in the relationship between the body, transmogrification, physical possibility and the deep-rooted history of violence that serves as a cornerstone to the American psyche. In addition to a new series of sculptures and drawings, Barney will premier his film, *SECONDARY*, in London, Paris and Los Angeles. Across the installations, Barney re-maps subject matter that has repeatedly circulated within his oeuvre, conflating notions of material potential and myth-making with the specter of entropic collapse.



Each arm of the exhibition traces back to the artist's 2023 film, *SECONDARY*, a five-channel work that draws its inspiration from the infamous 1978 Raiders vs. Patriots game in which defensive back Jack Tatum delivered an open field hit that left wide receiver Darryl Stingley permanently paralyzed. Recalling his own memories of the play, the impact, and the culture of spectacle that continues to inform the incident today, Barney addresses the consequences of a sport that has become synonymous with physical brutality. Moving from pregame to game, from play to impact, and finally arriving at the media's relentless repetition of the collision itself, the exhibitions examine the connective tissue that joins our scopophilic desire to witness lethal force with the anxieties stirred by the vulnerabilities of our own bodies.

Consistent with Barney's practice, the sculptural works in the exhibition trespass from the screen to the gallery, blurring the distance between the artist's constructed cinematic narratives and the corporeal. Comprised of a range of materials that exhibit individual intrinsic behaviors, the objects in *SECONDARY* probe issues of time and aging. Conjuring the limits of the body by using mediums that respectively indicate elasticity (synthetic polymers), strength (cast metals), and fragility (ceramic), Barney both memorializes and pathologizes the Tatum/Stingley event. Also included in each exhibition are a new series of large-scale drawings on aluminum panel, each of which expands upon the motif of the field emblem. Simultaneously diagrammatic and abstract, these drawings examine issues of repetition, memory, and the flux between the symbolic and the real.

For his exhibition at Sadie Coles HQ, *SECONDARY: light lens parallax*, Barney employs a series of formal tactics that examine the intersection between repetitive physical movement and the iterative artistic gesture. Exploring athletic equipment and infrastructural objects as evocations for the figure, the artist's new sculptures examine both failure and resilience within the body. While the gallery proposes itself as an arena for action, Barney exploits the varying natural qualities of his materials as metaphor for recovery and collapse. The ceramic pipe of *Sanguine Axis* is fused with plastic and buttressed by a stack of cast resin sandbags. It is a prosthetic intervention that is only partially successful in restoring the object to its original form, the spine-like column it supports sagging beneath the weight of a series of dumbbells created from ceramic and synthetic polymers. Countering this object's state of distress is *Power Rack Stack*, a piece installed directly on the Astroturf field – the same site of play and choreography that is featured in the film. Here two power racks, stacked and fused together, emulate the duet performed in *SECONDARY* by David Thomson (as Darryl Stingley) and Ted Johnson (as Russ Francis), and amplify the connection between physical endurance and breakdown.

Matthew Barney (b. 1967, San Francisco) is one of America's most significant living artists; over the past two decades, he has evolved a practice that encompasses filmmaking, performance, drawing, painting and sculpture. One of Barney's major bodies of work, *Redoubt*, 2019-ongoing, debuted in 2019 at Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven to critical acclaim. The multidisciplinary project has subsequently toured to UCCA, Beijing (2019-2020) and the Hayward Gallery, London (2021). He has exhibited internationally with major exhibitions including *REPRESSIA (decline)*, LACMA Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2023); *Secondary*, Matthew Barney studio, Long Island City, New York (2023); *Drawing Restraint 25*, Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (2022); *Cosmic Hunt*, Sadie Coles HQ, London (2020); *DRAWING RESTRAINT*, Adam Art Gallery, Victoria University of Wellington (2016); *Bildungsroman*, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (2016). *River of Fundament*, Haus der Kunst, Munich (2014), touring to the Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, Tasmania (2014-2015) and The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, Los Angeles (2015); *Subliming Vessel: The Drawings of Matthew Barney*, The Morgan Library & Museum, New York (2013), and the Bibliothèque nationale de France (2013-2014). His solo exhibition *The Cremaster Cycle*, organized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2004), travelled to the Museum Ludwig, Cologne, and the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. The large-scale exhibition of the entire *DRAWING RESTRAINT* series was organised by the 21st Century Museum for Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, and travelled to Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul (2005); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2005); the Serpentine Gallery, London (2007); and Kunsthalle Vienna (2008). Barney has received numerous awards including the Aperto prize at the 1993 Venice Biennale and the 1996 Hugo Boss Award. The artist lives and works in New York.

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