

MARIANNE BOESKY GALLERY

509 West 24th Street, New York, NY 10011

**Gina Beavers**  
*World War Me*

**On View April 30 – June 13, 2020**  
**Opening Reception on April 30, from 6:00 - 8:00 PM**

Marianne Boesky Gallery is pleased to present *World War Me*, Gina Beavers' inaugural solo exhibition with the gallery. For this exhibition, the artist will present a selection of both large-scale and intimate sculptural paintings, including new works that illuminate the ways in which social media has distorted and fractured our sense of self. The exhibition's title, *World War Me*—inspired by an online meme satirizing the probing voiceover of Carrie from the series *Sex and the City*—encapsulates Beavers' fascination with the juxtaposition of massive global events next to myopic self-obsession, particularly seen with social media.

Beavers spends hours scouring Instagram, YouTube, blogs, and other online sources in search of images that inspire, compel, repulse, and amuse her. In recent years, she has become particularly drawn to make-up tutorials created by both professional and amateur artists. Beavers takes stills from these tutorials and recreates them with incredible realism, enlivening the flattened image with dynamic physicality. To create her intensely tactile works, Beavers builds up acrylic paint so densely on the canvas that she is able to sculpt it with a knife. For larger works, she also uses foam to add to the fullness of the forms.

"I am intrigued by the tools of creativity that are proliferating online, particularly when people apply these to their own bodies, from elaborate face and body painting to nail art," said Beavers. "For the new works in *World War Me*, I began to use these tools on my own body, borrowing techniques from the internet to make certain artists and their work a part of my own physical self. I am interested in the ways existing online is performative, and the tremendous lengths people go to in constructing their online selves. Meme-makers, face-painters, people who make their hair into sculptures, are really a frontier of a new creative world."

*World War Me* will also feature new large-scale paintings. As the use and application techniques of make-up has grown into a highly aesthetic medium—with make-up artists using the face as a canvas to produce extreme effects—so too has the complexity of Beavers' work relating to this phenomenon. To create her newest body of works, Beavers painted her lips and cheeks with motifs from works by famous artists such as Franz Kline, Lee Bontecou, and Laura Owens, which she then photographed and used as source material. For Beavers, these artworks establish an intimate and physical connection to the history of art and question ideas of authorship and influence in the digital age.

In other recent works, Beavers explores how social media profiles and posts become endlessly self-referencing portraits, enabling the creation of multiple selves. For example, in one piece Beavers paints herself nude on her own face, and in another, the eyes of celebrities, illustrating how multiple personas and versions of oneself are generated online. Further, the images of her painted face are replicated in her sculptural paintings, creating illusionistic works that both compel and disorient the eye in ways that simulate the digital experience in physical space.

This fascination with identity and social media also dovetails with Beavers' interest in Jia Tolentino's essay "The I in Internet" from her recent book *Trick Mirror*, which examines how individual self-consciousness—especially in women—translates seamlessly into a desire for recognition and popularity

boeskygallery.com

telephone 212.680.9889

fax 212.680.9897

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online. To probe this idea further, Beavers gathered images of female bodies—whether nude photographs of famous artists or everyday women who have posted online—then used this source material as the basis to create altered versions of these images on herself and then on the canvas. These images are juxtaposed against works inspired by found memes and food porn, which blend ideas of consumption with sexual desire.

Taken together, the works in *World War Me* explore the intertwining trajectories of selfhood through the lens of social media, capturing the manner in which the internet has destabilized our sense of truth and reality, while simultaneously creating connection, gratification, and anxiety.

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Gina Beavers (b. 1974; Athens, Greece) creates paintings and installations inspired by photos culled from the internet and social media and rendered in high acrylic relief. Her series have included paintings that are based on body painting, social media snapshots of food, make-up tutorials, memes, and bodybuilder selfies. Her work has been presented in solo exhibitions at galleries including Michael Benevento, Los Angeles; GNYP Gallery, Berlin; Carl Kostyal, London; James Fuentes, New York; and included in group shows at Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York; Cheim and Read, New York; and Canada Gallery, New York, among others. In 2019, MoMA PS1 held Beavers' first solo museum exhibition, *Gina Beavers: The Life I Deserve*. Her work has also been included in group presentations at the Frans Hals Museum in the Netherlands, Kentucky Museum of Contemporary Art, Louisville; Nassau County Museum of Art, New York; Flag Art Foundation, New York; William Benton Museum of Art, Connecticut; and Abrons Art Center, New York. Her work is in the collections of the Whitney Museum, the Tel Aviv Museum of Art and the Institute of Contemporary Art Miami. Beavers holds a BA in Studio Art and Anthropology from the University of Virginia (1996), an MFA in Painting and Drawing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2000) and an MS in Education from Brooklyn College (2005). She currently lives and works in Newark, New Jersey.

### About Marianne Boesky Gallery

Since its inception in 1996, Marianne Boesky Gallery's mission has been to represent and support the work of contemporary international artists of all media. The gallery expanded its flagship location in 2016 to the adjacent space on West 24th Street. This space more than doubles the gallery's footprint in Chelsea, allowing for ever more ambitious solo and group shows that highlight dynamic narratives and parallels across artist, media, and theme. In 2017, the gallery opened its newest location, Boesky West, in Aspen, CO. This space presents rotating exhibitions by both gallery artists and artists invited to present special projects. With three locations in New York and Aspen, the gallery currently represents 30 esteemed artists of different generations and backgrounds. These recent expansions highlight the gallery's ongoing experimentations with space and architecture as well as its continued commitment to the needs and interests of its dynamic roster of artists from around the globe.

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For more information about Gina Beavers, please contact Gallery Director Kelly Woods at [kelly@boeskygallery.com](mailto:kelly@boeskygallery.com) or 212-680-9889. For press inquiries, please contact Thomas Dewey Davis, THIRD EYE, at [thomas@hellothirdeye.com](mailto:thomas@hellothirdeye.com) or +1 212.355.9009

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