

MEDIA RELEASE

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Charlie James Gallery is delighted to present the exhibition:

WILLIAM POWHIDA

AFTER 'AFTER THE CONTEMPORARY'

JANUARY 20 - MARCH 3, 2018

ARTIST'S RECEPTION: JANUARY 20, 2018, 6-9PM

Charlie James Gallery is pleased to present *After' After the Contemporary'*, an exhibition of new and recent works on paper by New York-based artist **William Powhida**. The title of the exhibition refers to Powhida's recent solo exhibition at the Aldrich Contemporary Museum of Art where the artist created a fictional retrospective look back from the year 2050 at the Contemporary period of art history. Here the artist presents one hundred and twenty 15" x 15" real and fictional *Artforum* advertisements¹ to create a darkly humorous, visual chronology of the period, which the artist defines as lasting from year 2000 until 2025, when it will come to an end along with other current social and cultural formations like democracy.

The artist's view of the future is not particularly optimistic as the art world slowly bifurcates between immersive public spectacles and the consolidation of superstar artists into elite, luxury brands. The advertisements from Powhida's history of the future reflect troubling trends of the present from the 'public-facing' selfie-stations of The Museum of Ice Cream to growth of mega galleries like Hauser & Wirth that offer 'museum quality' exhibitions. The exhibition also includes graphite drawings from 2016 including "Various Dismal Futures", "The Forever Now", and "Speculative Cynicism" that informed the narrative of *After the Contemporary*². Offering further context for the main installation, "The Contemporary in Context" presents the artist's graphic timeline of the Contemporary relative to specific historical and speculative events of the twenty-five-year period and longer term social and political transformations including the decline and growth of economic inequality. Together, the works expand and inform the artist's critique beyond the narrow concerns of Contemporary Art into popular culture, economics, and sociology.

The gallery is also pleased to present three new sculptural *Artforum* ads, 35" x 35" watercolor and acrylic works on paper mounted on aluminum, that offer a wry commentary on the recent revelations of alleged sexual harassment by former publisher Knight Landesmann at that magazine. The public rebuke of *Artforum's* ownership over the handling of the situation reflects the broader and ongoing struggles between labor and capital that allow for exploitation, abuse, and continuing inequalities that find too many forms of expression in contemporary Western, patriarchal societies enamored with celebrity, fashion, and entertainment³.

¹ The works are available framed for \$1,500 and you can insist on a 20% discount.

² Please don't ask for a discount. The artist would like to use funds from the sales of the paintings to print an artist's book.

³ Jeff Koons.