



Hubert Bush

Star Maps and Flying Couches

March 21, 2015 – April 25, 2015

Gavlak

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Opening Reception:
Saturday, March 21, 2015
6 - 8pm

Gavlak proudly presents a suite of new paintings and drawings by New York and Miami-based artist Hubert Bush. "Star Maps and Flying Couches," a body of the artist's most recent works, reflects upon the limitless projections of meaning that each of us may encounter when looking toward the night sky, an inevitably metaphorical act of approximation. To look to the heavens is historically and timelessly a search, an encounter, or an imaginary projection of one's place in the universe. We look to celestial form as a way to shape the chaotic and sometimes unbearable, or at least indiscernible, aspects of our present. The star-scape is both imaginary and circumnavigated. Whether viewed through the telescope as actual dimensionality or implied by the artist's hand through painted dots and connecting lines, or tangible forms over amorphous color fields, the celestial field opens up endless projections of solitude and possibility. It suggests renewable, daily interpretations of one star in relation to many - a suggestion of human inter-connectivity with both the next-door neighbor and the neighboring

galaxy. Hubert Bush's works hint toward this search for meaning on the ground. In his most recent works at Gavlak, Bush describes his subject matter in relation to the hand-made and the primordial, connecting to the idea that the most raw, creative act is itself a search for meaning, and reminding us that the "Babylonians, Assyrians and Greeks deified the heavens, named constellations and created images in their likeness, all in an attempt to chip away at the daunting unknown."

This sense of the daunting unknown in relation to the singular figure links the works in this exhibition. In fact, Bush's work entitled *I Promise*, 2015 (75 x 81 in.) suggests a cartographic center for the exhibition pulling the works together, indirectly mapping out the individual figures and constellations. It is composed, as many of the paintings are, using the explosive raw energy and impenetrability of spray paint over the luminescent yet speedy medium of gouache. Singular subjects in the various paintings, such as the isolated bicycle, the dancer, the composer, and the astronaut, emerge against the backdrop of *I Promise* as figures in search of the other, the unknown. As a whole, these clusters of human activity connect the dots between the paintings as silhouetted entities, each embodied object or actor in search of creative community.

Hubert Bush's own years of experience as an experimental filmmaker responding to his surroundings in New York City during the height of the AIDS crisis continues to inform his works. This may be seen as part of an ongoing fall-out in which the work of art persists as an extension of reciprocity and loss; the idea that these charted points in life may determine one's position within the universe. With a filmmaking background during the 1980s and 1990s, Bush's paintings also may be informed by the existential struggle apparent in the scratchy abstraction of paint on film that emerged in the work of artists like Stan Brakhage. To recognize this is to see that the artist's newest works continue to examine the figure-ground relationship to the world as a dynamic act in motion as well as an act of memory. The fast-paced exuberance of the line drawing, a graffiti-esque tag on linen, references the space of the urban wall as a visual crossroad, a colorful though not always welcome expression of anxiety and resistance. The graffiti tag is full of this ambivalence as a transgressive gesture, but also as a memorializing and passionate one. All of Bush's paintings in this selection, such as *Fireflies*, *Good Morning*, *I Will Survive*, and *Friends Forever* to name a few, seem united in this effort to link self and other, recognizing the creative act of an artist as inseparable from the humanistic act of creation. In the hands of Hubert Bush, this effort strikes one as an existential burst, both struggle and jubilation.

-Lisa Jaye Young, Ph.D.

Hubert Bush has studied at University of Vermont, University of Colorado, New York University, Columbia University, and The Arts Student League. He has written and directed documentaries, music videos, TV mini-series and feature

films, which have aired on PBS, MTV, NBC and Showtime. His artwork has been exhibited at Gallery Met, New York; Gavlak, Palm Beach; Central Fine, Miami Beach; and the Cincinnati Art Museum.

For more information concerning the exhibition, please contact:

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