

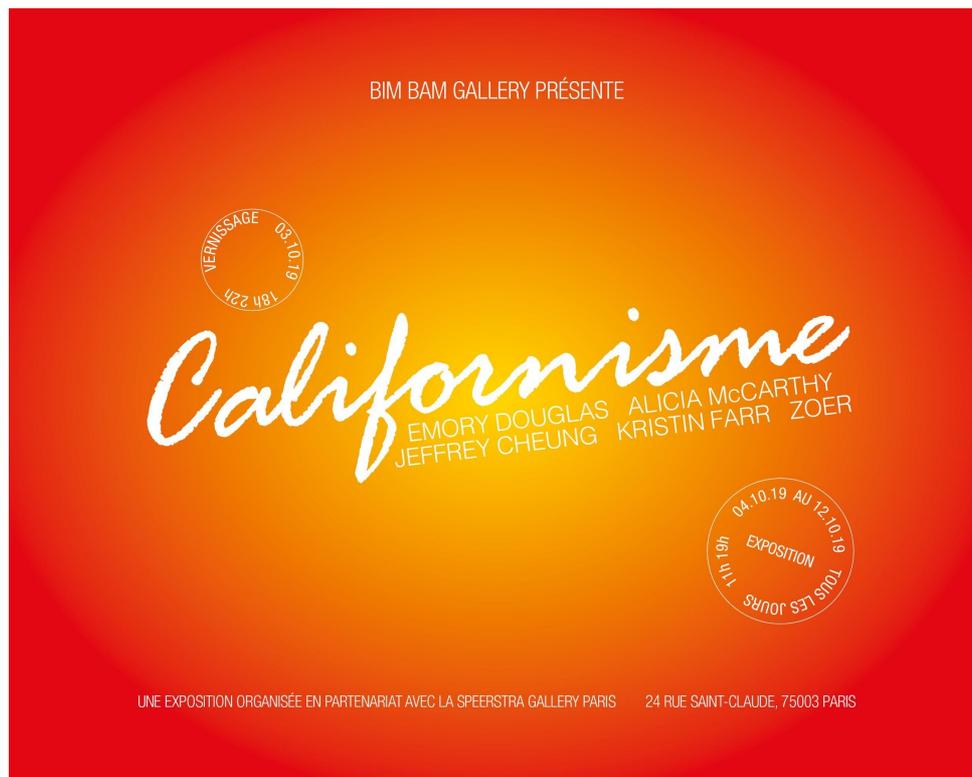
PRESS RELEASE - "CALIFORNISME"

EMORY DOUGLAS - ALICIA MCCARTHY - JEFFREY CHEUNG - KRISTIN FARR - ZOER

"CALIFORNISME" (in partnership with Speerstra Gallery Paris) - 24 rue Saint-Claude, 75003 Paris

Opening on Thursday October 3rd from 6pm to 10pm

Exhibition from October 4th to 12th 2019 - Open everyday from 11am to 7pm



Titled "Californisme", this collective exhibition aims to show California less as a geographical territory than as a state of mind.

California has played an outsized role in shaping and defining zeitgeists for many decades, from the rise of the automobile, to the social movements of the 60s and 70s, to the influence of the tech industry today. While the collective imagination associates California with sunshine and progress, the artists in this show also acknowledge the tensions generated by these changes which have implications far beyond the state's borders.

The purpose is to present the works of artists whose current concerns reflect the disruptions, positive or not, that are experienced by the west coast of the United States. Whether concerned with daily life or deeper topics, the different practices of the five artists in this selection reflect the way they absorb and then digest their environment and their time.

Most of these artists live in the Bay Area of San Francisco, and all of them are driven by the need to deal with the issues their contemporaries are facing. Through this visual journey, "Californisme" offers, above all, a vernacular look at universal issues.



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Minister of Culture for the Black Panther Party, **Emory Douglas** (born in 1943) broadcast his political drawings through the organization's newspaper, "The Black Panther", during the 1960's and 70's. With his striking visuals and uncompromising speech, his political activism is inseparable from his art. Emory Douglas represents the oppressed not as victims, but as rebels ready to take up arms. The circulation of his drawings on a large scale by the press allowed him to imprint on the collective imagination, making his work both popular and iconic. Today, he continues to make art, promoting education and commenting on current politics.

Painted with her unique casual virtuosity, the colorful abstractions of **Alicia McCarthy** (born in 1969) are sometimes reminiscent of delicate weavings of intertwined lines. This practice combines the simplicity of folk art, the precision of op art and the roughness of graffiti to plunge us into the complexity of the urban fabric. Alicia McCarthy embraces the imperfections on the surface of her works to better connect with her audience. As an important figure in the "Mission School", her work is now part of the collections of many museums in the United States.



The androgynous figures of **Jeffrey Cheung** (born in 1989) move and embrace each other in a lively and playful hand-to-hand dance. His characters are difficult to label. They spread with pride over the whole space of the paper, to better thwart the heteronormative codes that dominate in the public space. By the simplicity of his lines, Jeffrey Cheung celebrates the diversity of bodies, genders and sexualities. Co-founder of Unity Press and Unity Skateboarding, the young Californian is also very prolific in the world of fanzines and skateboarding.

In her circular paintings she calls "West Coast Hex Signs", **Kristin Farr** (born in 1978), her geometric structures and rich palettes provoke optical phenomena. Inspired by the Pennsylvania Dutch Hex Signs and synesthesia, her circles are also reminiscent of psychedelic art experiments. Whether radiating on the facades of buildings or on tondos, Kristin Farr's circular works gently bring motifs borrowed from popular crafts into the field of contemporary art. Her specialised training in sculpture and textile art, is reflected in these works.



As a former industrial designer, **Zoer** (born in 1985) is interested in objects for their capacity to reveal new insights about our behaviors. His current work focuses on cars, as a subject, object and material. Using this everyday vehicle, Zoer explores our relationship to leisure, space and movement. The obsolescence of the objects creates immediate relics, allowing Zoer to seize the freshly rusted carcasses to investigate what leads us to always go beyond the horizon.



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