

TOTAH

AARON FOWLER

Donkey Days

June 23 – August 25, 2018

TOTAH is proud to present *Donkey Days*, an exhibition of new works by Aaron Fowler, on view June 23 through August 25, 2018.

Donkey Days is an invitation to meditate; an interactive installation where viewers are active participants in the exhibition, fleshing out the ambient theme of seeking light, clarity, and insight through daily encounters with people and objects, by actually engaging in reflective contemplation.

Envisioning upward movement for his family and loved ones, in one piece Fowler depicts close friends and family members heading to Vipassana, including his brother, father, step-father, cousins, three childhood best friends, and mentor, Byron Kim, who introduced him to meditation. Borrowing a formal perspective from a classical pioneer painting, he uses repurposed materials to illustrate the process of migration, whether internal or external. Fowler invited those depicted to meditate in front of the piece and then play a game of pin the tail on the donkey directly onto the surface. The performative residue of these donkey tails forms a salient feature of the finalized painting.

Incorporating castoff furniture, oil and acrylic paint, and collaged elements, including iridescent CDs, water bottles, LED lights, sneakers, and plastic bags, Fowler has meticulously constructed hybrid tableaux that focus on self-reflection in an effort to discover an individual sense of power that is directed toward building community. His materials are arranged to highlight the mysterious tranquility that comes with meditation, while the figure of a donkey, a symbol of human imperfection, alludes to the struggle of accepting one's authentic self and the nature of transformation.

Aaron Fowler received his MFA from Yale University School of Art in 2014 and his BFA from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 2011. Fowler has exhibited throughout the United States and abroad, including shows at Saatchi Gallery, SCAD Museum of Art, The Rubell Family Collection, Beeler Gallery, Columbus College of Art & Design (solo), Diane Rosenstein Gallery (solo), the New Museum (solo), the Hammer Museum, and the Studio Museum in Harlem. He lives and works in Harlem, Los Angeles and St. Louis.

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