

BILL HAYDEN AND GREG PARMA SMITH
LEGEND OF FESTIVAL AND ENCLOSURE

March 16 - April 15, 2018

Thinking of Legend as a fable or a key to a map; Festival as an ecstatic suspension of worldly power relations; Enclosure as the removal of free space from shared use.

We're showing our individual and collaborative artworks that refer to visionary psychic space, medieval feudalism, the carnivalesque, private property, teacher plant medicines, alcohol, dualities, and the potential for rupture.

Writing on Rabelais' medieval literature, Mikhail Bakhtin describes carnival as a suspension of societal hierarchy that draws its organic force from primordial natural law—one far more powerful than that of the patriarchal authority of priests and kings that claim to sanction it. This dissolution of the borders defining the social order is inseparable from a dissolution of the individual body. In the ecstasy of carnival, body "is not separated from the rest of the world... it is not a closed, completed unit; it is unfinished, outgrows itself, transgresses its own limits... The [literary] stress is laid on those parts of the body that are open to the outside world, that is, the parts through which the world enters the body or emerges from it, or through which the body itself goes out to meet the world." Bas-relief, holes, self-enfolding or unfolding objects are present in this exhibition as well. Bakhtin characterizes this mode as the archaic grotesque.

In the corporeal world of the present, different types of ecstatic (out-of-body) states are commonplace, from absorption in the apparatus of technology, to Dionysian revelry, to spiritual practice of all kinds. They have the potential to bring liberation (as in divine communion, love, compassion, the shattering of calcified opinions and egoic dogmas) as well as enslavement (internet life negating the agency of the body, escapism, disembodied subjugation to abstracted forms of value, alienation from other people in shared circumstances).

A common panacea for an anxious mind is likening one's disposition to a throw of the dice. The circumstances of a being arriving in world is not a chance occurrence but a specific appropriation.

The question is, what do we do upon returning to the everyday, what did we learn?