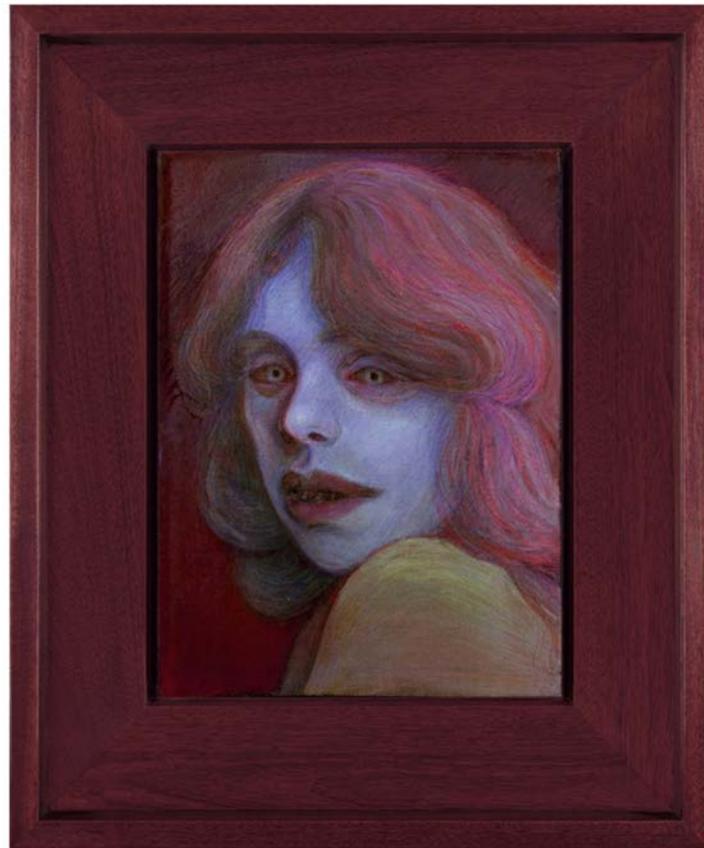


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The Brant Foundation
ART STUDY CENTER

THE BRANT FOUNDATION ART STUDY CENTER PRESENTS
STEVEN SHEARER
Opening November 13, 2016 through March 2017



Steven Shearer, *The Mauve Fauve*, 2007-2015, oil paint and oil pastel on jute, image: 15 1/8 x 11 1/4 x 1 1/8 inches; frame: 25 1/8 x 20 7/8 x 2 7/8 inches © Steven Shearer Studio. From Private Collection. Photo courtesy Stuart Shave/Modern Art, London and The Brant Foundation Art Study Center, Greenwich, CT.

Greenwich, CT, (September 29, 2016)—The Brant Foundation Art Study Center presents a solo exhibition of works by Steven Shearer from November 13, 2016, through March

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2017. The exhibition, which spans Shearer's prolific 20-year career working in a variety of media, brings together paintings, drawings, collages and poems to demonstrate the constantly evolving nature of the artist's practice.

Shearer's work draws upon a visual lexicon of portraiture and representation of the body, often using found imagery that he collects and archives as source material. Through this process, contemporary imagery is distilled into the tradition of portraiture revealing affinities between various modes of figuration throughout history to the present.

Shearer consistently returns to the found imagery he collects to use as the subject matter of his collage works, which incorporate images lifted from various fan magazines as well as from the web. These references often reflect not only his own personal experience of growing up in the suburbs of Vancouver, but also a collective memory of the visual and verbal landscape of suburban and teenage alienation. The subject of Shearer's collage works have ranged from metalheads to teen heartthrobs to prefabricated toolsheds. Three collage works will be in view, including *Sleep II* (2015), a large-scale triptych made up of found photographs of people asleep. Expressions of torment or ecstasy can be found in the manner of their sleeping bodies and faces, resembling those represented in religious paintings from the past. The historical tradition of statuary is evoked via found images of Leif Garrett in *Bad Cast* (2001), while *Scrap #2* (2003), is composed of 132 works on paper ranging from original drawings to found printed material.

Shearer's *Poems* also reference source material however much of the text is unique, having been inspired by titles and lyrics from Black & Death Metal songs. In these works white text is rendered on a black ground, as in the facade he created for the Canadian Pavilion at the 2011 Venice Biennale, to create monumental poems that convey overtones of illuminated manuscripts. In describing his works, which juxtapose "bodily, grotesque phrases" with the "austere graphic quality of the black and white graphics," the artist points to an effect that is both "unreal and funny." This exhibition will feature three series of *Poems* (*Poems V*, 2005; *Poems XXV*, 2011; *Poems XXXIV*, 2013), each consisting of seven drawings in charcoal on rag paper. Though some may find the poems deeply disturbing, there is also humor beyond the visceral impact achieved through their evocation of a Gothic excess and emotional barrier that protect a tormented core.

In contrast to the severity of the heavy charcoal *Poems*, the exhibition will highlight approximately 45 of Shearer's ink, oil, crayon and pastel drawings and paintings, many of which are rendered in colorful strokes reminiscent of les Fauves and Impressionists. Shearer's drawings and paintings express empathy for his often longhaired and androgynous subjects, in whom the works' romantic tone betrays an awkward vulnerability and isolation. The works on display will include a series of new paintings that mark a shift in Shearer's painting practice whereby the figures have become untethered from specific references taken from his own archive. The subjects of these paintings have evolved into figures with distinct physical attributes that inhabit densely

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rendered spaces that are imagined in greater depth and detail than in the illusory spaces found in earlier works.

About Steven Shearer

Steven Shearer was born in New Westminster, BC, Canada, and currently lives and works in Vancouver. Shearer was chosen to represent Canada in the 2011 Venice Biennale and has been exhibited internationally. Solo exhibitions include *Wrong Reflection* (Gavin Brown's enterprise, New York, 2013), *Double Album: Daniel Guzmán and Steven Shearer* (New Museum, New York, 2008), *Geometric Healing* (Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich, 2010) and *The Power Plant* (Toronto, 2007).

About the Brant Foundation Art Study Center

The Brant Foundation Art Study Center has a mission to promote education and appreciation of contemporary art and design, by making works available to institutions and individuals for scholarly study and examination. The Brant Foundation Art Study Center presents long-term exhibitions curated primarily from the collection. The collection is remarkable in that scores of artists are represented in depth, including works from the earliest period of their practice through their most recent works. Currently, the Brant Foundation, Inc., established in 1996, lends works to more than a dozen exhibitions per year. The Brant Foundation Art Study Center is located at 941 North Street, Greenwich, Connecticut, and is open Monday through Friday by appointment. Appointments can be scheduled online at BrantFoundation.org.

*Join in the conversation with the Brant Foundation and Steven Shearer on Instagram via **@TheBrantFoundation** and the hashtag **#StevenShearer**.*

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