



THE BRANT FOUNDATION ART STUDY CENTER ANNOUNCES  
A SOLO EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY SPENCER SWEENEY

*Perfect* opens May 10, 2022



Spencer Sweeney, *Perfect*, 2012. Oil on canvas. 30 1/8 x 48 inches

Greenwich, CT - The Brant Foundation Art Study center is pleased to present an exhibition of paintings and works on paper by Spencer Sweeney. The exhibition, titled *Perfect*, will be on view beginning May 10, 2022.

Known for his psychologically rich figurative paintings, and collaborations with various musicians, performers, and artists in the downtown New York City art scene throughout his career, Sweeney will present an exhibition tracing his robust practice over the past 15 years throughout the Foundation in three parts.

Beginning on the lower level of the Foundation, Sweeney will introduce the exhibition with a series of self-portraits with significant emotional depth and tension as the subconscious fights to the surface of the canvas. With these works, Sweeney reaches inside to express the psychological territory he is navigating as he goes about his daily routine. Works such as *Rouge Bather* (2018), *Studio* (2010), *Self Portrait Transposition* (2013), and *Pregnant Woman on Horseback* (2010), create a sometimes humorous and self-deprecating tableau of interior fantasies, insecurities, musings, and struggles involved in the creative process.

Sweeney notes, “The title *Perfect* is utilized here in broad philosophical terms, contemplating the challenges in the full acceptance of life in its entirety including of course, the imperfect. For instance, in the case of the self-portraits, with all their anxiety, pathos and chaos, are depictions of difficult moments along the path of the creative process, which in the end and with some perspective, might as well be ‘Perfect.’”

The Foundation’s double height gallery will feature several large-scale variations of the nude in repose. In these musings on the classical motif, Sweeney distills the figure down to its essence, conveyed through shape, hue, and line. Monochromatic paintings such as *Before Behind* (2019) and *Moonlit Lady* (2012) create a bold feminine figure in outline and emphasize a lyrical playfulness. Improvisations such as *Woman with Metronome* (2019) is an exploration in the boundaries of abstraction and form. Sweeney refines the expression in his ongoing engagement with the characteristics of the feminine.

In addition to his paintings, music is central to Sweeney’s practice, and the artist has been a vital presence and performer in his own right in the nightlife and music scene of New York City. Further galleries will feature announcement paintings from various events, parties, musical shows, and concerts that Sweeney helped organize. The posters feature names of performers and artist collaborators such as Philip Glass, Laurie Anderson, Peter Doig, Telfar Clemens, Afrika Bambaataa, Craig Harris, Pete Drungle, Kai Althoff, Pheeroan akLaff, and Jay Rodriguez, among others.

Paintings produced to announce *Headz*, a collaborative art and music performance salon initiated by Sweeney, Urs Fischer, and Brendan Dugan, will also be on view. *Headz* was conceived as an open studio where artists – both established and amateur – could come together to draw, paint, or sculpt, and also became a hub for live improvisational music performances. The salon’s collaborative space shifted the act of art making into a shared experience.

### **About Spencer Sweeney**

Spencer Sweeney was born in 1973 in Philadelphia, and lives and works in New York. Collections include the High Museum of Art, Atlanta; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and Museum of Modern Art, New York. Group exhibitions include the Whitney Biennial, New York (2006); and *That Was Then, This Is Now*, MoMA PS1, New York (2008). Performances include *Hey, You Never Know* (curated by Carol Greene and Kenny Schachter), 534 LaGuardia Place, New York (1998); and *CrissCross: Some Young New Yorkers III*, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York (1999). In 2015, Kitto-San published *Spencer Sweeney*, a retrospective monograph featuring interviews with fellow artists and other figures from Sweeney’s diverse cultural circles.

## **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.

In March 2019, The Brant Foundation presented a solo exhibition of works by Jean-Michel Basquiat to celebrate the inauguration of its new space in New York City's East Village. Located at 421 East 6th Street, the space occupies a century-old building originally designed as a substation for Consolidated Edison. The building subsequently served as the home and studio of famed artist Walter De Maria from the mid-1980s until his death in 2013. Richard Gluckman of Gluckman Tang Architects renovated the former substation to create a 16,000-square-foot building that features 7,000 square feet of exhibition space arrayed across four floors. The project includes two new gardens adjacent to the structure and a landscaped roof terrace.

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