

METRO PICTURES



Jim Shaw

March 17 – April 21, 2012

Opening reception: Saturday, March 17th, 5:30 – 6:30 pm

For Jim Shaw's exhibition at Metro Pictures the Los Angeles-based artist presents a large mural and 20 drawings comprising a comic book that center on his fictional religion Oism, a narrative Shaw has been developing for more than 20 years. The works draw on eccentric aspects of American history and quirky old imagery to illustrate part two of Shaw's proposed, four-part Oist prog rock opera. Its story, told through the comic book, follows two small-time crooks as they break into the Museum of Oist History in Omaha. Seeking refuge from encroaching FBI agents the pair ducks into a 24-hour wig museum where a helpful curator hides them beneath wigs that inexplicably render them invisible and transport them to the ancient homeland of the religion's founding deity O.

The mural *The Rinse Cycle* (2012) is Shaw's latest painting on found canvas theater backdrops. Executed in the tradition of 1970s album art, Shaw says *The Rinse Cycle* "symbolically represents the opera's second movement in which a group of oversized beehive hairdos hover around a desert landscape they share with the interior view of a washing machine in mid-cycle." The 20-page comic book "Into the Void" (2012) illustrates the opera's themes and symbols in the style of, as Shaw describes, "pre-code 50s crime and horror comics, with a religious didactic aspect thrown into the mix." Audacious 1960s hairstyles, comic books and Christian ephemera all play into the elaborate visualization of Shaw's outlandish yet incisive mythology.

The recently published book, "My Mirage" (2011), includes all the works from Shaw's renowned "Billy" series, which chronicles the transition of a white middle-class American kid named Billy from acid-dropping teen to pagan cult member and finally "reborn" Christian fundamentalist.

One-person exhibitions include: Kunstmuseum Luzern, Lucerne, Switzerland (2011); CAPC Musée d'art contemporain, Bordeaux, France (2011); MoMA PS 1, New York (2007); Magasin Center of Contemporary Art, Grenoble, France (2003); Swiss Institute, New York (2002); and Frankfurt Kunstverein (1998). Shaw's work has been in group exhibitions at: Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2011); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2011); Los Angeles County Museum (2010); New Museum, New York (2010); The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2009/10); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2006); and Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2006).

Gallery hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm

For more information, please contact Alexander Ferrando at alexander@metropictures.com or 212 206 7100

Image: *The Rinse Cycle* (detail), 2012. Acrylic on muslin, 150 x 230 inches (381 x 584.2 cm)