

# HEATHERGAUDIOFINEART

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – December 27, 2023**

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**Heather Gaudio Fine Art** is pleased to present *Michael Dweck: Blunderbust*, his first solo exhibition at the gallery. The show will open April 11<sup>th</sup>, with a reception for the artist 6-8pm, and will be on view through June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

Dweck is a multi-disciplinary artist primarily known for working in photography, most notably for his series documenting niche socio-cultural identities such as *Mermaids*, *Habana Libre*, and *The End: Montauk*. Over the years his artistic practice expanded to sculpture and filmmaking, and more recently he has delved into painting. The gallery will be presenting *Blunderbust*, Dweck's first paintings from the multi-media corpus that also includes photography, sculpture, installations, and a feature documentary.

For over 70 years, the Long Island car raceways were a vital part of its small-town, blue-collar culture. Dweck grew up minutes from Freeport Stadium known for a survival-of-the-fittest type of racing rallies, "somewhere between NASCAR and *Mad Max*, whose wild theater – jostling colors and stench of gas and burnt rubber, the cacophony of screeching tires and crashing metal" made for some of the artist's early memories. As is the fate of many such enclaves, Freeport was replaced by a strip mall in 1983, and in 2007 Dweck began to document the last surviving rally called "Blunderbust" at Riverhead Raceway in Long Island. What began as an intent to document a dying tradition soon translated to other formalist concerns.

For Dweck, the aesthetic aspect of the cars became works of art in their own right, with streaked, scored and marked automobile bodies becoming painted surfaces evocative of folk-art painting. The salvaged chassis also took on the properties of sculptural forms for the artist. "In a broader social context, Riverhead became for me a paradigm of a fading Americana, one not of lament however, but defiant celebration." The artist returned to Riverhead over a 10-year period, developing the multi-media work of art that was to become *Blunderbust*.

Inspired by the painted surfaces of the vehicles, the photographer became a painter himself, creating large paintings on aluminum, the imagery sourced from collages, archival photography and the extreme closeups of the lacerated painted metal. The visual vernacular loses all sense of perspective as the artist seeks to amplify the multiple layers of paint, dings, dents, and



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scratches, highlighting various vestiges of the car's history. Instead of being copies of car parts, these paintings are evocative of the track's unbridled speed and raw intensity. Dweck maintains a visual authenticity in these works applying car paint with brushes and aerosols. He further enhances their physicality using power tools to pierce and mark the surfaces, adding alloy detritus, rubber fillings and the like to evoke the metal-on-metal action on the speedway.

A self-taught visual artist, Dweck's four-decade career has spanned a range of media and subjects. "I am fascinated by endangered enclaves on society's periphery and envision an anthropological impulse at my practice's core: to depict beauty and intricacy of forms of life, while critically reflecting upon my means of doing so." In 2012, Dweck became the first American photographer to have exhibited in Cuba since the U.S. embargo in 1960. His work has been exhibited to critical acclaim in galleries and museums worldwide and held in numerous permanent collections. In addition to his acclaimed narrative photographic series, Dweck's films *The Truffle Hunters* (2020) and *The Last Race* (2018) have been featured in over 45 international film festivals including Cannes, Sundance, Telluride and New York. The former was shortlisted for the Oscars and BAFTAs and won the Director's Guild of America Award and the American Guild of Cinematographer's Best Director Award. Dweck lives and works in New York City.

**Heather Gaudio Fine Art** specializes in emerging and established artists, offering painting, works on paper, photography, and sculpture. The gallery provides a full-range of art advisory services, from forming and maintaining a collection, to securing secondary market material, to assisting with framing and installation. The focus is on each individual client, selecting art that best serves his or her vision, space, and resources. The six exhibitions offered every year are designed to present important talent and provide artwork appealing to a broad range of interests. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday; 10:30am to 5:30pm; and by appointment. For more information and/or high-res images, please contact Rachael Palacios [rachael@heathergaudiofineart.com](mailto:rachael@heathergaudiofineart.com)

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Michael Dweck, *1,2,3, Go! (Blue), Blunderbust*, 2023

Acrylic, pumice, spray paint, metal flakes, oil paint, paint chips on aluminum  
60 x 130 x 2 inches