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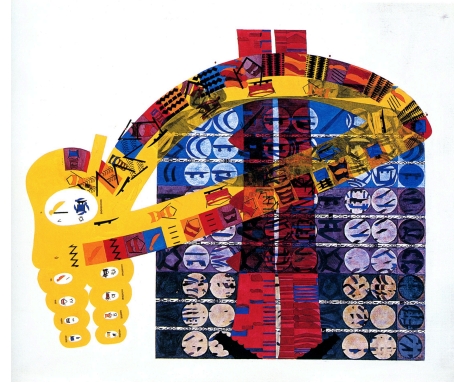
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## Öyvind Fahlström *Myth Science*

Thursday, September 24 2015 - Friday Oct 23 2015  
Opening Reception: Thursday September 24th 6-9:30 p.m.

The Yellow Chair Gallery: 47 Orchard St. New York, NY 10002  
Inaugurated in 2015, Yellow Chair Gallery is a flex gallery space and creative extension of VGS, a branding and creative collective with a concentration in advertising and film, founded by Scott Carlson and Liev Schreiber.



There is no reality which is not illusory, no illusions which are not reality.  
---Öyvind Fahlström

New York City, NY – The Yellow Chair Gallery is pleased to present *Myth Science*, an exhibition of works by Öyvind Fahlström and Mike Kelley

The title of the exhibition, *Myth Science*, is derived from Kelley’s acclaimed 1995 essay written as an homage to Fahlström, an artist whom he greatly admired and whose career he followed intimately. Öyvind Fahlström’s practice had a profound influence on Kelley and inspired him to relinquish an element of fear that accelerated his personal and artistic growth, “I believe [the use of hand drawn images as opposed to images derived from popular sources] was a radical decision for the artist. Fahlström’s use of material lifted from popular culture suggests that the artist was something of a sociologist, standing outside of the culture whose myths he was “deconstructing.””[1]

What is the science behind a myth? Does this statement in and of itself present a contradiction? Science claims to rely on systems, known quantities, and a search for absolute and undeniable truth void of emotion and the constraints the human condition imposes. Myth on the other hand represents a fictitious narrative with a foundation purportedly in truth that slowly implants itself in our collective psyche. So, what constitutes the process of creating a myth or mythologizing a figure or event? How does a narrative or entity achieve mythic status?

Both artists relied on the formal properties of their work for attention and initial visual impact beginning with a layer of trauma, an image or provocation, and followed by levels of visual depth, complexity and relate-ability on behalf of the viewer sparking feelings of empathy. For Mike Kelley, this dichotomy remained crucial and vital. Öyvind Fahlström’s work embraced a more pragmatic and scientific approach, rooted in facts, data, and published information aggregated into seemingly chaotic yet precisely ordered masses of paint and collage on canvas or in beautifully rendered studies for significant installation works. Fahlström stressed that the beauty of the art exists to make tolerable the terrifying insights stirred in the viewer by the factual political events depicted therein. In the end, for both artists, the reality of life remained traumatic and an insurmountable struggle. Fahlström sought to confront the atrocities of the world around us while Kelley confronted the horrors imbedded in his own mind drawing attention to and striking an empathetic chord with anyone taking the time to consider his tune.

The show consists of 8 paintings, drawings and studies by Öyvind Fahlström juxtaposed with a major, early sculpture by Mike Kelley, and a live adaptation of R. Crumb.

Öyvind Fahlström (b. Brazil 1928 d. Stockholm 1976) remains one of the mid-twentieth century’s most compelling multi-media artists working in assemblage, sculpture, drawing, painting, poetry, film and performance. He spent his career working between New York, Paris and Rome. His profoundly unique oeuvre defies contextualization and remains riddled with content. Ultimately, he could not be distracted or wooed with pure aesthetics but rather sought “to create a fusion of insight and pleasure...to formulate the terrifying shortness of life and the terrible shortcomings in a

world where we struggle to experience and to create happiness” (Öyvind Fahlström, *Texts and Manifestoes* by Torsten Ekbohm, Robert Rauschenberg, and Öyvind Fahlström, New York, 1967, n.p.). He has exhibited widely throughout the world and his work remains in countless major institutional collections.

Mike Kelley (b. Detroit 1954 d. Los Angeles 2012) remains one of the 21st century’s most influential and individual artists working in performance, installation, drawing, painting, video, photography, sound, text, and sculpture. Destroy All Monsters, an improvisational band formed Ann Arbor, Michigan, MI in 1974 included Kelley along with artists Jim Shaw, Niagara, and Cary Loren. His formal artwork arose in the ‘80s prominently featuring found materials, repurposed flea-market toys, blankets, and stuffed animals that he used to explore the notions of memory, trauma, and repression that plagued him throughout his life. Kelley’s work is represented in a multitude of major public collections. During his life, he was the recipient of many awards and prizes including the Wolfgang Hahn Prize; a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Grant; a National Endowment for the Visual Arts Fellowship, Awards in the Visual Arts grant; a Skowhegan Medal for Mixed Media; the Distinguished Alumni Award, University of Michigan School of Art and Design; the Distinguished Alumnus/a Award, California Institute of the Arts; and a Guggenheim Fellowship. Collected writings, edited by John C. Welchman include: *Foul Perfection: Essays and Criticism* (MIT, 2002), *Minor Histories: Statements, Conversations, Proposals* (MIT, 2004), and *Mike Kelley: Interviews, Conversations and Chit-Chat* (JRP|Ringier, 2005).

A special thanks to Richard L. Feigen and Co. and Andrea Crane.

[1] <http://www.fahlstrom.com/on-fahlstrom/myth-science-mike-kelley-1995>