

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ISLANDS

Brian Rea

Dates: March 8, 2019 – April 13, 2019

Opening Reception: Friday, March 8, 2019 | 6 – 8 PM

CMay Gallery is pleased to present **ISLANDS**, a solo exhibition of new paintings and drawings by Los Angeles-based artist **Brian Rea**. This show will also be the inaugural exhibit at our new space located in Miracle Mile, LA. Rea's list-based paintings unfurl as Postmodern poetry mosaics, expressing the human impulse to parse and catalog our experiences as a way to anchor ourselves inside a fleeting existence. This kind of observational, existential stock-taking is both a meditative and a performative act, generating a bricolage of free-association storytelling that is both accessible and universal.

Beyond the hand-lettered words and phrases that form the fractal vignettes of Rea's micro-narratives, his paintings also serve as physical and semiotic exercises in mark-making and the nuanced relationships between image and object. As images, the word compositions formulate natural and architectural forms within which to arrange the words, like tiny Gertrude Stein-inspired masonry. Along these lines too, Rea is adept at translating the vibrating line and gestural imprint of writing into larger-scale brushwork that retains the urgency of the *scritti*.

Each larger work contains many hundreds of word bubbles, simulating the oft overwhelming experience of consciousness. It's not cognitively possible to see everything at once, or to predict how any given prompt will take each viewer on their own journey. No man is an island, but each man is an archipelago of his past. "Islands" evoke images of escape, isolation, retreat, or an exotic remoteness. For Rea, islands represent places where you are alone -- with your thoughts, with your past, and with yourself.

Brian Rea lives and works in Los Angeles and is the former art director of the Op-Ed page of the New York Times. His award-winning, emotionally charged drawings can be seen each week alongside the paper's column "Modern Love." He has produced books, posters, murals, film and fashion projects for clients around the world. Some of these collaborations include Apple, Marni, Google, The New Yorker, Airbnb, Penguin Books, Herman Miller, Malcolm Gladwell and Vanity Fair. Rea's intricate drawings and list-based paintings have been exhibited in Paris, Tokyo, Los Angeles, Mexico City, São Paulo, Seoul, New York and Barcelona at the Joan Miró Foundation as part of the group show *Murals*. Rea recently published his first book, *Death Wins a Goldfish*, (Chronicle Books).

For more information, please contact us at info@cmaygallery.com.