

GLADSTONE

Matthew Barney presents new site-specific video installation *SECONDARY* at the artist's Long Island City studio

SECONDARY is Matthew Barney's latest five-channel video installation. It was filmed in Barney's sculpture studio in Long Island City, where it will be staged as an exhibition in May 2023. The studio is both the site and a central character in *SECONDARY*'s narrative structure.

SECONDARY maps two different narratives onto each other, using movement as the formal through-line. The first describes the complex overlay of violence and spectacle inherent in American football, and more broadly within American culture. Barney's personal involvement in the sport served as a starting point for the development of this project. The extreme physical and psychological conditions of the game have been abstracted in Barney's art practice since his earliest work, and now provide a context for this subject that is both retrospective and a new, direct engagement.

The significant risk of the game became clear, and made a lasting impression on Barney as a young player, through an incident that took place in a professional football game on August 12, 1978 where Jack Tatum, a defensive back for the Oakland Raiders, delivered an open field hit on Darryl Stingley, a wide receiver for the New England Patriots. Stingley was left paralyzed. The impact, and Stingley's resulting catastrophic injury, became mythic in scale through its relentless replay in sports media. It was also a watershed case for the reform of rules protecting the bodies of athletes, which remains a polemic in football today, now gathering critical mass in the media. *SECONDARY*'s underlying plotline examines these charged aspects of football—and, specifically, Barney's memory of that play in 1978—through a movement vocabulary that focuses on each element of the game, from drills to pre-game rituals to the moments of impact. It seeks to explore the complicated overlay of actual violence and its currency as image within the sport and the culture at large.

The parallel narrative in *SECONDARY* is a material-based choreography where the substances Barney uses to make sculpture—lead, aluminum, terracotta, and plastic, all in various states of liquidity—are generated, formed, and manipulated by the performers in real time. These materials speak to qualities of strength, elasticity, fragility, and memory, and each, in its own way, embodies a character. The athletes cast in *SECONDARY* are played by professional dancers and by Barney, and they range broadly in age, but with an emphasis on older bodies.

SECONDARY is an ensemble piece, developed with the performers in the collaborative environment of improvisational workshops by Barney together with movement director David Thomson and composer Jonathan Bepler. The cast includes dancers, actors, and musicians from diverse movement backgrounds—football

G L A D S T O N E

technique, postmodern movement, Krump and Break Dance vocabularies, dramatic acting, and extended vocal methods. The principal performers are David Thomson, Raphael Xavier, Shamar Watt, Wally Cardona, Ted Johnson, Matthew Barney, Thomas Kopache, Jacquelyn Deshchidn, Isabel Crespo Pardo, Kyoko Kitamura, and Jeffrey Gavett.

Barney's studio sits on a pier on the bank of the East River. Inside the studio is a six-foot-deep trench excavated from the concrete floor. This hole reveals a shattered ceramic pipe that drains into the river. This spatial condition takes on another character in *SECONDARY* and shapes the plot. As the tide rises, the trench floods with river water, keeping time for the narrative; the evolution of the characters becomes tethered to the slow exposition of this broken structure.

SECONDARY marks the artist's first public exhibition staged within the studio, on view in Long Island City from May 12–June 25, 2023.

Exhibition Details

SECONDARY

May 12 – June 25, 2023

Long Island City, New York City

About Matthew Barney

Matthew Barney (b. 1967, San Francisco, California) lives and works in New York. His work has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions worldwide, including *SECONDARY* at the Cartier Foundation, Paris in 2024 and *REDOUBT*, which premiered at the Yale University Art Gallery in 2019, and traveled to the UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China. Additional institutional exhibitions include *THE CREMASTER CYCLE*, organized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York in 2004 and traveled to Museum Ludwig, Cologne and Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; *DRAWING RESTRAINT 9*, organized by the 21st Century Museum for Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan in 2005 and traveled to Leeum Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Serpentine Gallery, London; and Kunsthalle Vienna; and *RIVER OF FUNDAMENT*, organized by Haus der Kunst, Munich in 2014 and traveled to The Museum of Old and New Art, Tasmania, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Barney has received several awards including the Aperto prize at the 1993 Venice Biennale; the Hugo Boss Award in 1996; the 2007 Kaiser Ring Award in Goslar, Germany; and the San Francisco International Film Festival's Persistence of Vision Award in 2011. Barney was named an honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2024.

About Gladstone Gallery

Gladstone is recognized for its embrace of experimentation and visionary practices. The gallery has long been an active partner with artists pursuing catalytic ideas and engaging with pressing issues. Headquartered in New York, Gladstone's impact extends globally with galleries in Brussels and Seoul, enabling it to present new bodies of work and evolve its program to advance the practices and reach of its artists

G L A D S T O N E

through time. Alongside its work with contemporary artists, the gallery is a steward of the legacies of pivotal historical artists and an advocate for the enduring power of their work. Gladstone is led by a team of partners who spearhead its long-term vision and program, building on the values of its founder Barbara Gladstone.

Press Contact

press@gladstonegallery.com