

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST



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1. *Painting Palettes (Painter's Table)*, 2015–2016
Oil on canvas
8 parts, 31 x 23 inches each, overall dimensions variable
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harry L. Davis

2. *A Room Is Always New Because It Lives in the Eye*, 2015
Oil on canvas over panel, modified paint can, rear-painted Plexiglas
23 x 17 inches
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harry L. Davis

3. *Friday and Sunday*, 2015
Marble dust, resin, cast aquaresin
14 x 7 x 2 1/2 inches
Courtesy of the artist

4. *Monday and Sunday*, 2015
Marble dust, resin, cast aquaresin
19 x 4 x 2 inches
Courtesy of the artist

5. *Saturday and Tuesday*, 2015
Marble dust, resin, cast aquaresin
22 x 5 x 3 inches
Courtesy of the artist

6. *Ship/Bottle/Puzzle*, 2015
Oil on canvas over panel in artist's frame, modified paint can, rear-painted Plexiglas
19 x 25 x 4 inches
Collection of Steven Kaczmarek and Glen Hyde

7. *Sunday and Thursday*, 2015
Marble dust, resin, cast aquaresin
23 x 2 1/2 x 3 1/2 inches
Courtesy of the artist

8. *Sunrise in Different Dimensions*, 2015
Oil on canvas over panel, modified paint can, rear-painted Plexiglas
23 x 17 inches
Collection of Melanie Endo

9. *The Orangeie*, 2015
Oil on canvas panel, tinted Plexiglas in artist's frame
11 1/2 x 9 inches
Collection of Dorothy Heyl and Tom DePietro

10. *The Sun Never Sets*, 2015
Cast aquaresin, acrylic paint, pen and ink on paper, artist's frame
22 x 28 x 2 inches
Courtesy of the artist

11. *The Sun Never Sets*, 2015
Cast aquaresin, acrylic paint, pen and ink on paper, artist's frame
22 x 28 x 2 inches
Courtesy of the artist

12. *The Thought of the Thoughtless*, 2015
Oil on steel
12 x 16 x 2 inches
Courtesy of the artist

13. *The Thought of the Thoughtless*, 2015
Oil on steel
12 x 16 x 2 inches
Collection of Alejandro Jassan

14. *The Thought of the Thoughtless (Forward)*, 2015
Oil on steel
12 x 10 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches
Courtesy of the artist

15. *Thursday and Monday*, 2015
Marble dust, resin, cast aquaresin
25 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches
Courtesy of the artist

16. *Thursday and Saturday*, 2015
Marble dust, resin, cast aquaresin
14 x 3 1/2 x 2 inches
Courtesy of the artist

17. *Tuesday and Monday*, 2015
Marble dust, resin, cast aquaresin
16 x 3 3/4 x 2 1/2 inches
Courtesy of the artist

18. *Emitter (25VLT)*, 2014–2015
Oil on canvas, tinted glass in artist's frame
38 x 59 x 2 1/2 inches
Courtesy of the artist

19. *Camera Painting for Claude Lorraine*, 2014
Oil on canvas over panel, modified paint can, rear-painted Plexiglas
23 x 17 x 5 inches
Collection of Alejandro Jassan

20. *Clock Painting for Sir Isaac Newton*, 2014
Oil on canvas over panel, modified paint can, rear-painted Plexiglas
23 x 17 x 1 inches
Courtesy of the artist

21. *Puddle Painting for Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 2014
Acrylic on canvas over panel, modified paint can, rear-painted Plexiglas
23 x 17 x 1 inches
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harry L. Davis

22. *The Sun Never Sets (World—Climatic)*, 2014
Cast aquaresin, marker and pen on paper, varnish, acrylic paint
16 x 12 inches
Collection of Zach Feuer and Alison Fox

23. *The Sun Never Sets (World—Economic)*, 2014
Cast aquaresin, marker and pen on paper, varnish, acrylic paint
16 x 12 inches
Collection of Lauren Marinaro

24. *Emitter (50VLT)*, 2013–2014
Oil on canvas, tinted glass in artist's frame
38 x 59 x 2 1/2 inches
Courtesy of the artist

25. *The Thought of the Thoughtless (Backwards)*, 2013
Oil on steel
12 x 16 x 3 inches
Collection of Pamela K. and William A. Royall, Jr.

26. *The Thought of the Thoughtless (Forward)*, 2013
Oil on steel
12 x 16 x 3 inches
Collection of Pamela K. and William A. Royall, Jr.

27. *The Thought of the Thoughtless (Out, Over, Under)*, 2013
Oil on steel
12 x 16 x 2 inches
Collection of Monica Herman

28. *The Thought of the Thoughtless*, 2013
Oil on steel
12 x 16 x 2 inches
Collection of Steven Sergioanni and Chris Satek

29. *The Thought of the Thoughtless*, 2013
Oil on steel
12 x 16 x 2 inches
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harry L. Davis

Conor Backman was born in 1988 in Arlington, Virginia. He lives and works in New York City.

He has had solo exhibitions at Smart Objects in Los Angeles (2016), James Fuentes in New York City (2015), and Retrospective Gallery in Hudson, New York (2015). He has been included in group exhibitions at Galerie Gebr Lehmann in Berlin (2016), The Capodimonte Museum in Naples, Italy (2014), Saamlung in Hong Kong (2012), and Higher Pictures in New York City (2012).

Backman received B.F.A.s in sculpture and painting from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2011. He was co-founder of Reference Art Gallery in Richmond, Virginia, which operated from 2009–2012.

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UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY, STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



Clocks Tick, Tides Turn by Allison Fonder

A Clock and Map Minute, Conor Backman's first solo museum exhibition, brings together a group of sculptural paintings produced over the past five years. The pieces on view address the act of creating in relation to evolving perceptions of time, geographical location, and materiality. By obscuring delineations between simulation and reality, contrasting the handmade with the ready-made, and examining contemporaneity through anachronistic methods, the works find themselves both contrary to and befitting a moment when the digital homogenization of information and culture challenges conventions of representation and reference.

Much of Backman's work is activated through association, combining abstraction and symbolism for allusive effect. In his series *The Sun Never Sets*, a peeled orange, cast in resin and painted to an uncanny likeness, is placed on top of a hand-drawn map. The two works are merged as a means of linking the painter with the cartographer, both of whom engage the task of reducing the three-dimensional world to a flat surface. While pointing to multiple ideas of abstraction and representation, the composition also alludes to the "flattening" of the world by way of globalization.

Time-traversing parallels and hidden dualities are of high importance to each work on display. Backman's *Emitter* series uncovers historical continuations relating to reductionism through the simple act of viewing. Each piece is framed behind different shades of black automotive glass, reducing the clarity of the painting by varying degrees. While the presence of the dark glass alludes to the perception of painting as a reductionist documentation method, it simultaneously calls to mind the sheen of computer or phone screens. The manual diminution of the image's dimensionality affects the viewer's acquaintance with the live work, thus imitating a digital viewing experience.

Backman's ongoing series *The Thought of the Thoughtless* incorporates imagery of ocean waves on steel sculptures that resemble open magazines. As with other objects in the exhibit, the painted imagery echoes the format on which it is presented. The word "wave" functions as both a noun and a verb,

suggesting not only a concrete visualization of ocean surf but also literal or figurative movement. The surface and its support work in unison, highlighting Backman's desire to complicate the distinction between painting and sculpture while also speaking metaphorically to the speed at which we have transitioned from ephemeral print to digital media as a means of disseminating information. Sculptural works in the exhibition attempt to fossilize this idea of temporal progression as well. A set of hanging reliefs, whose forms abstractly imply the surface of eroded tombstones, mimic the natural degradation of geological time on a man-made object that operates as a marker of time.

The element of time is perhaps distilled most purely in *Painting Palettes (Artist's Table)*. The set of eight canvases is comprised of two distinct elements: an image of a palette, and an actual one used to create the painted imagery. The contrast of product and process sets off a feedback loop that activates both an awareness of the artist's presence and a ciphered critique of where value is located within a conceptual work of art. A group of paintings that features three-dimensional paint cans embedded in the center of the canvases offers a similar visual provocation, presenting a simulacrum of fresh wet paint that, while abstract, arguably emulates reality more accurately than the adjacent representational imagery.

References within *A Clock and Map Minute* often beg the question, what makes a work of art more "real"? By proving the efficacy of representation and abstraction in tandem, the artist further complicates this question. In this regard, arrangements throughout *A Clock and Map Minute* speak as much to the alchemical concept of the ouroboros as they do to the mathematical Möbius strip—making it clear that Backman's puzzle-like logic and layered code reveal a creative struggle to establish the artist-rendered image as its own language, separate from traditional poetic structures.

Allison Fonder is a writer based in New York. She is a co-founder and editor at *Wit Magazine*, an arts-focused publication that explores conceptual trajectories in creative and cultural forms.



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The Sun Never Sets, 2015, cast aquaresin, acrylic paint, pen and ink on paper, artist's frame, 22 x 28 x 2 inches. Courtesy of the artist
The Thought of the Thoughtless, 2013, oil on steel, 12 x 16 x 2 inches. Collection of Steven Sergiovanni and Chris Satek

Conor Backman A CLOCK AND MAP MINUTE

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