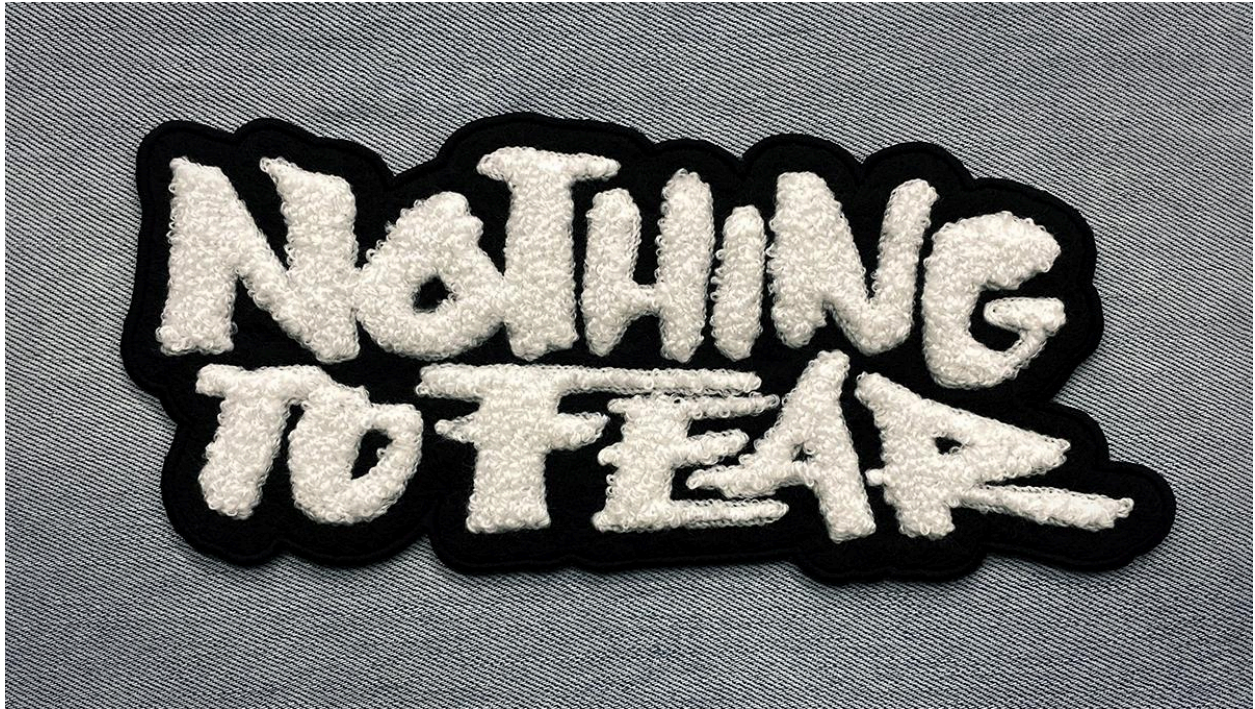


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



WILL PENNY: *Nothing to Fear*

January 19 - March 23

Opening Reception: Friday, January 19, 6 - 8:30pm

Artist Talk: March 21, 6:30 - 7:30pm

Laney Contemporary is pleased to present *Nothing to Fear*, an exhibition of new work by Savannah-based artist, Will Penny. Combining traditional art making tools with emerging technologies, including painting, sculpture, video, and found materials, Penny explores the sublimity and absurdity of our encounters and pursuits of the unknown.

Raised in rural southern Ontario in the 1990s, *Nothing to Fear* reflects the impact of the artist's Canadian upbringing, from the seemingly endless expanses of disquieting farm land to the pervasive cultures of extreme sports, alternative music and satellite television. Drawn to the supernatural and steeped in folklore at a young age, his work probes the distinct feeling of awe, terror and wonder that initially sparked this fascination. *Nothing to Fear* highlights the multifaceted nature of the sublime and its existence between aversion and fascination that rests on the edge of human understanding and in the orbit of the ridiculous. This exhibition speaks to the artist's longtime use of artificial intelligence, programming, video and projection—tools frequently likened to magic and supernatural phenomena due to their apparent seamless and inexplicable capabilities.

Nothing to Fear was built through highly varied, personal, and influential cultural references, including the artist's longtime affinity for early animatronics, the X-files, ice hockey and the tchotchkes that decorated his family's home. Penny draws from these eclectic references and from his bank of collected digital media to generate layered compositions in various mediums, namely acrylic paint, resin and silver nitrate. Repurposing and deconstructing found objects, the artist highlights ubiquitous items from his youth, such as out-of-vogue trinkets and t-shirts. Through alchemical processes like gilding and hydro dipping, these objects come to distort the boundaries of past, present and imagined realities. Similarly, the juxtaposition of a 24-hour virtual reality experience and a furious montage of 90s-era commercials emphasizes the warping effects of technology and its ability to shape our experience of time.

In part a nostalgic exploration of the formative images and experiences of his youth, this exhibition asks us to consider what it means to search for the unknown, whether in pursuit of a reported Sasquatch or exploring uncharted territories of new artistic mediums. In an era of rapid technological developments and big picture questions about the threat of automation, digital sentience, and originality in the face of artificial intelligence, *Nothing to Fear* is a reminder to make light in the shadow of anxiety.



The Soldier and Death, 2024
Acrylic on aluminum composite panel
41 x 47 x 6 in

Bio:

Will Penny (b. 1984) was born in Woodstock, Ontario and has lived and worked in Savannah, Georgia for 18 years. He received his MFA (2013) and BFA (2008) in Painting from The Savannah College of Art and Design and a diploma in Fine Art from Fanshawe College in London, Ontario (2006). His work has been exhibited at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga; Francis Marion University, Florence; Telfair Museums, Savannah; the Museum of Arts and Sciences, Macon; Georgia Southern University, Statesboro; and HUBweek, Boston. He is the recipient of the SCAD Dean's Fellowship award, and his work has been acquired by collections such as Telfair Museums, Savannah; Google Ventures, New York; and the Mercedes-Benz Stadium, Atlanta. He is represented by Laney Contemporary.

Reception Details:

Our reception for Will Penny will take place on Friday, January 19th from 6 to 8:30pm with a food truck on premises.

Gallery Hours / Contact Information:

Tuesday - Friday, 11-5pm

Saturday, 11-2pm

and by appointment

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