

FINTAN MAGEE

The Big Dry

June 2 - June 23, 2018

(Los Angeles, CA) - Thinkspace is pleased to present *The Big Dry*, its first solo exhibition of new works by Australian-born artist and muralist, Fintan Magee. A prolific international muralist, Magee has created architecturally scaled paintings and public interventions all over the world; over 200 murals across five continents, including pieces in Bogota, Buenos Aires, Copenhagen, London, Vienna, Los Angeles, Moscow, and Oslo, among many others. Magee draws from the personal and the social to reveal unexpected moments of universality and connection, addressing topical and current issues like climate change, environmental crisis, political inequity, loss, and displacement, all framed with pathos, sensitivity, and humor.

The Big Dry will feature a series of paintings, short stories, drawings, and installations that address Magee's personal experiences surrounding the "Millennium drought" in Australia, said to be the worst scarcity of the resource in the country's history since its settlement in the 18th-Century. The exhibition uses this personal framework to explore larger global issues such as climate change, water usage, and environmental destruction, animating these severe concerns through a localized context to make them all the more humanly relatable and immediate. Drawing links between the ongoing drought in California and that experienced by Queensland, Magee stresses the global nature of these ecological crises and the far-reaching consequences of their portents if left unheeded. *The Big Dry* in its consideration of loss and resource insufficiency draws further connections to sociopolitical issues such as immigration and the decline of the working classes.

Born in Lismore, New South Wales, Australia, to creative parents, Magee grew up in Brisbane where he first gravitated towards graffiti. Encouraged to pursue drawing at an early age, Magee started painting local walls in his hometown at the beginning of high school and remained a graffiti writer, primarily, until 2010. He eventually outgrew the aesthetic and compositional limitations of writing and turned towards figuration and ambitious large-scale mural painting instead. Inspired by the street art scene and muralism movement evolving in the UK at the time with artists like Chloe Early, Connor Harrington, and Ian Francis, Magee began experimenting with narrative representation and figuration. Executing larger and more complex murals all over the world, Magee began developing his own voice, responding to site and place with contextually inflected public works created in specific response to the environment.

Magee is ultimately a contemporary social realist and a portrait painter. Though he incorporates compelling and poetic elements of the surreal into his impressive murals, his works are driven by an emphasis on individual stories and socially conscious narratives. Magee keeps his imagery firmly rooted in real human concern while drawing personal parallels with his own experiences and anecdotes. A firm believer in the substantive power of art to transform city spaces, democratize culture, and resonate with the masses on a guttural level, Magee continues to convert endless city sprawls into physically imposing stories, one massive wall at a time.

DAVID RICE

Hanging Valley

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Concurrently, on view in the Thinkspace project room is *Hanging Valley* featuring new works by Portland-based artist, illustrator, and designer, David Rice. Inspired by the potential of unlikely pairings, Rice pushes the limits and boundaries of the physical world through his imagery, accessing a lawless surreal in which patterns merge with physical spaces, human and natural worlds intermingle, and the scale of site and place slide.

A gifted realist painter, Rice's works combine beautifully rendered flora and fauna with references to cityscapes, architectures, graphic motifs, natural phenomena, and patterns. The juxtaposition of these elements transforms Rice's visual universe into one of fantasy and experiment. Things that shouldn't coexist together plausibly do, and the viewer is offered new entry points into otherwise familiar objects and spaces, invited to see them anew through a less restrictive framework and encouraged to forge new relationships to the subject matter.

Rice's creative free association supports these subtle, and at times not so subtle, shifts in reality. Protean and expansive, his environments are close enough to the real to feel familiar and far enough away to feel transporting and completely unknown.