

**Wasserman Projects Extends Spring Exhibitions into Summer 2020,
With Formal Opening Dates to be Determined
In Accordance with Health and Safety Guidelines**

Dorota & Steve Coy: The Five Realms and
Adrian Wong: Tiles, Grates, Poles, Rocks, Plants, and Veggies

Portion of Proceeds from Artwork Sales to Benefit Gleaners Food Bank

Detroit (May 2020)—Wasserman Projects will extend its two spring exhibitions, *Dorota & Steve Coy: The Five Realms* and *Adrian Wong: Tiles, Grates, Poles, Rocks, Plants, and Veggies*, into summer 2020. Both exhibitions were slated to open to the public on March 13, but were closed just days prior in accordance with health and safety guidelines. *The Five Realms* features five distinct immersive installations that continue Detroit-based artists Dorota & Steve Coy's examinations of the relationships between humanity, the natural world, and commodity, past, present, and into the future. *Tiles, Grates, Poles, Rocks, Plants, and Veggies* includes works from across 10 years of Chicago-based artist Adrian Wong's practice, which together capture his engagement with the underlying conceptual ideas and historic contexts found within simple, everyday design elements. Content for the exhibitions currently lives digitally on Wasserman Projects' website and formal opening dates will be announced as soon as is possible. To support its local community, Wasserman Projects, in collaboration with the featured artists, will donate 10% of any proceeds from artwork sales to Gleaners Food Bank, which has been providing food and other essentials to Southeast Michigan since 1977.

Dorota & Steve Coy: The Five Realms

Throughout their careers, husband and wife team, Dorota and Steve Coy, have explored the human condition and the constructs that form our sense of reality. Their work often takes the form of large-scale public interventions, immersive environments, and conceptual projects such as the Hygienic Dress League in which the artists established a legally registered corporation to further probe ideas of commodification in our contemporary society.

For their exhibition at Wasserman Projects, the duo created a series of installations that take audiences through a range of environments that speak to both our present moment—and its ills—as well as several speculative futures. Among the spaces is the *Black Forest*, in which viewers are confronted with an entirely black environment. In the midst of black walls, trees, and branches, a single spotlight shines on a life-sized, golden rhinoceros—its shimmering and life-like body seemingly melting into the floor. The deeply visceral installation evokes our environmental decay, and the lives and species that will be lost if we continue on the same trajectory. In another area, the artists have created a museum from 10,000 years into the future, featuring fossilized plastic bottles and other elements of debris as a suggestion of the

legacy we stand to leave behind. The “museum” also includes the incredibly poignant sculpture, *Lover of Wisdom*, which is comprised of a classical bust wearing a gas mask. The concluding environment connects with the artists’ Hygienic Dress League project. Here, viewers walk into what appears to be a high-end fashion boutique, but the items on sale include cans of clean air and water and crystal-encrusted respirators. With this installation, the artists question who will own and have access to these essential needs in a future that doesn’t seem so distant.

“Dorota and Steve’s work is magnetic in its incredible ability to merge aesthetic beauty with a sense of underlying catastrophic reality. You find yourself initially drawn by the sumptuousness of the work, and then you are quickly awakened to its unsettling nature,” said Wasserman Projects Director and exhibition curator Alison Wong. “I started working with Dorota and Steve on this exhibition several years ago, without knowing exactly how prescient it would become. In our current moment, their explorations of commodity and its connections to and destruction of nature and also community are remarkably topical. I hope that the exhibition, whether experienced online or eventually in person, will foster much needed dialogues on the future we both want to create and avert.”

Adrian Wong: Tiles, Grates, Poles, Rocks, Plants, and Veggies

Adrian Wong started his career in psychology, and has brought his training in research methodologies to bear on his artistic practice. His wide-ranging installations, sculptures, and videos are connected by an ongoing interest in exploring his physical, emotional, and psychic relationship to the environments in which he finds himself. Many of his works deal with the design, in its many permutations, of the urban spaces of Hong Kong, where he lived for over thirteen years. Inspired by objects and elements discovered on daily walks in areas both open and restricted to the public, Wong’s formal approaches and experimentations are steeped in a deep understanding of the histories and cultural references of his subjects.

His exhibition at Wasserman Projects includes works that span a decade of Wong’s practice, from 2010 to the present. Together, they encapsulate several disparate bodies of visual research—highlighting the ways in which simple, everyday design elements, which we often take for granted, are actually the outcomes of cultural beliefs and traditions as well as psychological and behavioral motivations. Among Wong’s earlier works in the exhibition is his *Grates* series, in which he explores how public spaces are demarcated by seen and unseen boundaries, coordinating our interactions and affecting our sense of environment. To capture his study and exploration of this idea, Wong took grates developed for different spaces and superimposed them into layered and complex sculptures that both evoke and break their original contexts.

In a more recent series of rock compositions, Wong explores notions of authenticity and the creation of myth and reality, using detailed replicas from the now defunct Tiger Balm Garden in Hong Kong. The tourist attraction, established by the inventor of Tiger Balm ointment, had served as a backdrop for countless postcards and iconic Hong Kong films, but little about the site is genuine in its evocation of “Orientalist” landscapes. Wong’s compositions embrace that dissonance and produce yet a new layer in the history of these objects. Also included are a series of new sculptures that draw on the history and ubiquity of barber shop poles across Asia. Here, again the formal qualities of the works bely the rigorous historical and cultural study that underlie them—a characteristic emblematic of Wong’s wider oeuvre.

About Dorota and Steve Coy

Dorota (b. 1978, Poland) and Steve Coy (b. 1978, USA) are a husband and wife conceptual and visual artist duo based in Detroit. Their work is often epistemological in nature and explores aspects of the human condition and contemporary society while challenging reality, truth, and belief systems. The couple's public installations have been exhibited on numerous occasions in Detroit, MI, and they have appeared internationally in cities including London, England; Berlin, Germany; Montreal, Canada; and Madrid, Spain, among others. In 2017 their work was the subject of a solo exhibition at the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo in Bogota, Colombia. They have also recently completed residencies in France for Project DeDale, Portugal for Art Loures Publica, and in Buenos Aires for the cheLA Foundation.

About Adrian Wong

Wong (b. 1980) was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. Originally trained in psychology (Stanford MA, '03), he began making and exhibiting work in San Francisco while concurrently conducting research in developmental linguistics. He continued his post-graduate studies in sculpture (Yale MFA, '05). Wong relocated his studio to Hong Kong in 2005, but recently returned to Chicago, where he currently teaches at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His work has been exhibited at The Drawing Center (New York), Kuandu Museum (Taipei), Kunsthalle Wien, Kunstmuseum Bern, Kunstverein (Hamburg), Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (Seoul), Palazzo Reale (Milan), Saatchi Gallery (London), and Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art (Rotterdam)—and can be found in public and private collections worldwide, including the DSL Foundation (Paris), K11 Art Foundation (Shanghai), Kadist Foundation (San Francisco), and M+ Museum (Hong Kong), among others.

About Wasserman Projects

Wasserman Projects was conceived by Michigan-native Gary Wasserman and opened its doors in a former firehouse in Detroit's historic Eastern Market, one of the oldest and largest year-round markets in the U.S., in fall 2015. Wasserman Projects is guided by a spirit of collaboration, recognizing that artist projects are best realized and most meaningful when they engage a broad range of cultural organizers, community leaders, and the dynamic and diverse populations of Detroit. The organization works with artists from across disciplines and around the world, presenting exhibitions and performances that will spark a discourse on art, but also cultural, social, or political issues, which are particularly active and timely in Detroit. Wasserman Projects is nimble in its approach, operating in part as a for-profit gallery as well as a presentation space, and helps artists bring to fruition new projects that may not otherwise be possible.

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