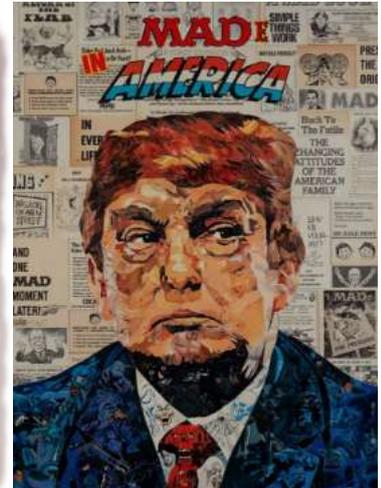


Ben Turnbull presents American History RemiX at London's Saatchi Gallery

Opening this June, Ben Turnbull will reveal an unhinged exploration of America's turbulent history within Saatchi Gallery's ground floor gallery space

17th June – 17th July 2021

Private view: Wednesday 23rd June, 6.30-9pm



(Left to right: American Horror Story (2020), Distress (2019) and Made in America (2019) on display in American History RemiX)

April 2021 – Artist Ben Turnbull presents **American History RemiX**; a retrospective exhibition voyaging through 150 years of America's tumultuous past at London's Saatchi Gallery, opening 17th June. With an unashamedly parodic lens, *American History RemiX* is a boldly candid exploration of the nation's most defining moments, from the birth of the 'American Frontier', via the Kennedy assassinations to the darker days of gun culture and the inauguration of Donald Trump.

American History RemiX subverts the childhood innocence of comics, action figures, colourful collages and school paraphernalia to reimagine U.S history through the eyes of a troubled child, like that of Sid from Toy Story. On display for the first time, Turnbull's latest work *Seduction of the Innocent* (2021), created during lockdown, is inspired by psychiatrist Frederic Wertham's 1954 book of the same name that warned comics were damaging to young minds. In his signature 'Angry Pop' style Turnbull offers an alternative theory using the very comics Wertham condemns, manipulating these to expose the engulfing web of America's political mayhem with unforgiving accuracy.

Bringing together a body of work created over 15 years, including never-before-seen pieces, *American History RemiX* is a shocking encounter with the U.S's uncomfortable truths. The chillingly satirical collage of Harvey Weinstein's portrait in *American Horror Story* (2020), pieced together from smiling magazine shots of Hollywood women emblazoned with 'Creepshow' invokes the dark reality of America's history that takes place behind the glossy façade. Throughout, the polarity between the innocuous and the appalling is magnified, as works like the *I Don't Like Mondays* series (2008), featuring weapons carved into school desks - a commentary on gun massacres in U.S schools – mimic the extreme sides of America's history that has gripped the world for decades.

Capturing the duality of heroism and violence that defines America, *Bring Me The Head of Saddam Hussein* (2008) is a looming, hand sculpted 7ft Captain America proudly holding Hussein's head as a

powerful statement on unwavering dedication to patriotism and national identity. Yet in a poignant turn, *Postcards from the Edge No2* (2016), featuring letters from young soldiers to their families at home during the Vietnam War, visualises the human cost of the insanity of war. Works like *Decimation* (2018) and *Once Upon a Time in America* (2018), showing Cowboys fighting Indians on a reimagined Mount Rushmore made from iconic comics, including Billy the Kid originals and Western Dime novels, encapsulates the problematic and idealistic portrayal of history taught to young Americans.

Ben Turnbull said: *“American History RemiX at the Saatchi Gallery is the culmination of my ongoing examination of American history that continues to fascinate and surprise the world. The works presented here are 15 years in the making, and I urge all to look for the hidden meanings and truths within these pieces. Over the last few years, I’ve worked to deliver both sides of the narrative, that is the insider and outsider’s perspective, as it’s vital we consider both sides of the coin when weighing up global histories”.*

American History RemiX follows Turnbull’s successful *Manifest Decimation* exhibition of 2019 in an age of healing for America, as the nation begins to assess, enact new movements and repair the damage of recent years. Challenging the way we perceive history, this exhibition continues Turnbull’s ongoing exploration of the struggles that define one of the most powerful countries in the world.

Ben Turnbull: American History RemiX will be on display from 17th June – 17th July at The Saatchi Gallery, London.

Private view: 23rd June 6.30pm -9pm. RSVP culture@purplepr.com

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Listing Information:

Ben Turnbull: American History RemiX

17th June – 17th July

Free admission – pre-booking may be required depending upon COVID guidelines

Opening hours: Wednesday to Sunday, 10am to 6pm (last entry 5.15pm)

The Saatchi Gallery, Duke of York's HQ, King's Rd, Chelsea, London SW3 4RY

About Ben Turnbull:

Ben Turnbull is a contemporary pop artist who lives and works in London. Born in London in 1974, Turnbull has been fascinated by American pop culture and comic books since his early youth. Americana is central to his art; working with found objects, including vintage comic books and toys, he creates challenging and provocative discourses on American politics and social ideologies. Having previously worked as a craftsman on the set of film productions, Turnbull’s works are painstakingly made with meticulous detail and precision.

Turnbull has exhibited in a number of solo exhibitions, including his breakthrough show ‘Us Vs Them’ at the Lazarides Gallery in 2007 after his inclusion in the infamous ‘Santa’s Ghetto’ show on Oxford St in 2006. He was also offered a prestigious solo representation at Volta NY in 2010 after a series of his London shows brought attention to gun crime and teenage angst. In 2011 Turnbull exhibited ‘Supermen – An Exhibition of Heroes’ at Eleven Fine Art, which presented a series of comic book

collage portraits of the firefighters who gave their lives during the 9/11 attacks. Turnbull has also exhibited in a variety of international group shows, including 2012's 'We Could Be Heroes: The Mythology of Monsters and Heroes in Contemporary Art' in Utah, USA and was invited to exhibit a retrospective of his large scale works at The Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts the same year.

www.benturnbull.com

About SAATCHI GALLERY

Since 1985, Saatchi Gallery has provided an innovative platform for contemporary art. Exhibitions have presented works by largely unseen young artists, or by international artists whose work has been rarely or never exhibited in the UK. This approach has made the Gallery one of the most recognised names in contemporary art. Since moving to its current 70,000 square feet space in the Duke of York's Headquarters in Chelsea, London, the Gallery has welcomed over 10 million visitors. The Gallery hosts over 5,000 schools visits annually and has over 6 million followers on social media. In 2019 Saatchi Gallery became a charity, beginning a new chapter in its history.

www.saatchigallery.com