

eric firestone gallery

For Immediate Release:

Eric Firestone Gallery at ART SG

Booth #1D01

Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Center | Singapore

January 12 – 15, 2023

For the inaugural Art SG art fair (January 12 – 15, 2023) Eric Firestone Gallery in Booth #1D01 is pleased to present a selection of work by FUTURA2000 (b. Leonard Hilton McGurr, 1955). On-view will be new works by FUTURA2000, who is credited with introducing abstraction to subway painting — colliding the art historical tradition of Abstract Expressionism with the spontaneity and energy of urban art-making.

Among the most acclaimed graffiti artists who began his career painting subway cars in the late 1970s, FUTURA2000 has continued to evolve his innovative studio practice over the past four decades. As art historian and critic Carter Ratcliff writes, “The balance and counterbalance of composition has been with us for centuries. Having grasped—and mastered—this age-old way of organizing a painting, FUTURA made the transition from graffiti “writer” to artist. Not stopping there, he experimented with the “allover image”, a kind of pictorial structure seen first in paintings in the mid 1940’s...” and adds “With a confidence he has always been able to count on, he turns the daunting blankness of the canvas into an occasion for an unexpected response.”

The artist’s work bears his interest in a futuristic aesthetic. He has long been fascinated by science fiction and the space age. He enrolled in the US Navy in 1974, traveling across the world, and becoming intrigued by the computer and navigational systems. He was an early adopter to sophisticated computer technology and video gaming. His compositional choices relate to these interests. By leaving areas of his canvases open—generating monochromatic energy fields and allowing forms to float across the surface—FUTURA2000 suggests access to a cosmic space. His recurring motifs include an atom shape, denoting perpetual motion; a crane or a linear mark, signifying a break or rupture; and the “Pointman.”

FUTURA2000 has deep ties to the continent of Asia; and in recent years, his work has been featured in numerous exhibitions across the region. Having first traveled to Asia in the early



**FUTURA2000 | In the studio, New York 2022
Photo credit: ShiLei McGurr**

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1970's, FUTURA2000 remarked on his excitement to return to Singapore:

“I first arrived in ASIA, when I was (18) years old, in the summer of (73') . . . while serving (4) years of military service. Most notably on that trip were visits to JAPAN, the PHILIPPINES, GUAM, KOREA, THAILAND, MALAYSIA, INDONESIA, HONG KONG and SINGAPORE. exactly (10) years later in (83') I would return, however this time as an artist, exhibiting in a gallery in TOKYO. The following decade in early (03') I would open my flagship FUTURALABORATORIES shop in FUKUOKA, JAPAN. So much has transpired in the past (2) decades, with the evolution of my work in Asia and I am looking forward to returning to Singapore for Art SG.”



Tseng Kwong Chi | *On the Subway* | 1983
silver gelatin LE print
53h x 81w in.

FUTURA2000's work has been shown at The New Museum, New York, NY; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; the Groninger Museum, Groninger, Netherlands; and Yvon Lambert, Galerie De Noirmont. He was the subject of a 2019 exhibition at Urban Spree Gallery, Berlin, Germany and a monumental site-specific installation in 2020 at the Palais de Tokyo, Japan. His work was also included in the 2020 exhibition “Writing the Future: Basquiat and the Hip Hop Generation,” at the Museum of Fine Art, Boston, MA.

Futura's work is on view currently in the exhibition “Somewhere Downtown,” at the UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing.

At ART SG, Eric Firestone Gallery will additionally present Joe Overstreet and Tseng Kowng Chi, whose work is also included in the UCCA exhibition. “Somewhere Downtown,” curated by Carlo McCormick and Peter Eeley, celebrates the creativity of Downtown New York City in the 1980s.

Tseng Kwong Chi (b. 1950, Hong Kong; d. 1990, New York) was an important documentarian and denizen of the downtown 1980s New York club and art scene. During his brief but prolific 10-year career, he created vibrant color and black- and-white photographs of his contemporaries Keith Haring, Andy Warhol, Julian Schnabel, Jean-Michel Basquiat, McDermott and McGough, Kenny Scharf, Philip Taaffe, Madonna, Grace Jones, the B-52's, and Fab Five Freddy, among others, a rich historical archive of the decade. He also had a trickster sense-of-humor, creating provocative images that contend with stereotypes of gender and Asian identity. His work is represented in numerous museum collections, including The Art Institute of Chicago; the

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Joe Overstreet | *Untitled* | 1982
acrylic on canvas construction
79h x 77w in

Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia; The Los Angeles County Museum of Art; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, California; The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Experimental shaped canvas constructions by Joe Overstreet (b. Conehatta, MS, 1933 d. New York, 2019) will be on view at ART SG. Like many African American families who were part of the Great Migration, Overstreet's early life was nomadic, and his early exposure was to Black and Native American rural culture. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Overstreet employed various techniques like pouring, acrylic transfer, cutting and attaching strips and lengths of paint, and using wood dowels to create shaped canvas supports that evoke nomadic structures and indigenous traditions. Overstreet's work can be found in the

collections of the Brooklyn Museum, Mississippi Museum, The Rose Art Museum, Crystal Bridges, Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Menil Collection.

Eric Firestone Gallery was established in 2010 at 4 Newtown Lane in East Hampton, New York. In 2015, the gallery expanded with an additional location — Eric Firestone Loft — in an historic artist live/work building at 4 Great Jones Street in New York City. In 2020, the gallery opened a third location, its second on Great Jones Street, a ground floor gallery at 40 Great Jones Street. Eric Firestone Gallery exhibits post-war and contemporary artists, and has a unique commitment to re-examining historic work and presenting major figures deserving of reintroduction. The gallery supports this mission with rigorous scholarship and archival research, looking at the entirety of an artist's mission, creative vision, and life, in collaboration with institutions and collectors.

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will be on view through from January 12 – 15, 2023
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For further information and images, contact press@ericfirestonegallery.com