

**Exhibition of new and reimagined works by Michael Dweck opens at Modernism**



Abstract Mermaid 266b 266a 269a 269c, 2015. Archival pigment print, each individual piece 22 X 24 inches (55.8 X 61 cm), total installed 46 X 50 inches (116.8 X 127 cm) Edition of 3.

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA.** - [Modernism](#) presents Nymphs and Sirens, a diverse collection of new and reimagined works by acclaimed American visual artist Michael Dweck. Since his childhood on Long Island's cloistered shores, the sea has served as muse, subject and metaphor in Dweck's art. It revealed itself as an Eden for the "forever young" surfers in 2004's paradisiacal and symbolic *The End: Montauk, N.Y.*, and appeared again as an abstract environment for the evasive female forms that populated 2009's impressionistic *Mermaids*. Now, in his latest body of work, *Nymphs and Sirens*, Dweck, turns his focus to motion and medium, while carrying along reference points from the aforementioned sea-inspired collections.

**Scuptural Forms**

At the center of the new collection is a series of Scuptural Forms that feature photographs from *Montauk* and *Mermaids* printed on silk and coated with fiberglass and layers of high-gloss resin by skilled artisans to create beautiful, handmade surfboard-shaped sculptures that seamlessly merge Dweck's subject and medium. "I love the implied movement of these forms, as well as the smooth, fluid shapes," says Dweck. "They become vehicles that transport you to other places... I would like people to have a transporting experience with the work."

**Mural Form**

Contrasting the subtle curves of the boards, is a Mural Form that renders one of Dweck's

“mermaids” larger than life, an apparition worthy of the Homeric legend. At 16 feet wide and 9 feet high and comprising one seamless panel printed on canvas, the mural’s striking format gives its subject a new intensity and characterization as well as a firm, confrontational air. The “mermaid,” originally photographed below the surface in the waters of Florida’s Weeki Wachee River, immerses the viewer with her sheer size and uses rich detail to bring a sense of mobility and intimacy to the imposing mural.

### **Composite Forms**

The final piece of the collection ties together the previous experimentations with movement, form and scope. This large-scale Composite Form combines multiple underwater images that capture the flow of bodies through time, using Dweck’s careful composition to tease the brain and its sensitivity to motion cues. While there’s no complete form or movement in any given frame, the combined information across multiple sections gives the piece an undeniable sense of gesture and time – what Dweck calls “a deconstructed and submerged ode to Eadweard Muybridge’s work in the 1870s.”

For all their differences, the three formats and two series are unified by the subtlety and seductive physicality of Dweck’s subjects. From the vibrant images of Montauk youth (reminiscent of Joel Meyerowitz’s documentation of Cape Cod and Provincetown, paired with a thrust of Richard Avedon’s dynamism) to the sensual and abstract mermaids (inspired in concept by Dweck’s midnight fishing trips and in appearance by the works of Matisse and Yves Klein), Nymphs and Sirens is a shape-shifting, time-travelling ode to human form and all of its flowing intangibles, internal and external.

“It’s always exciting to try to create a successful contradiction – in this case, to present motion in still work,” says Dweck. “But I owed it to the subject to take the static and make it fluid again... That’s what this collection honors – inherent form and motion that refuse to resign to anything.”

Michael Dweck, an American visual artist and filmmaker, was born in Brooklyn in 1957 and lives and works in New York. Select solo exhibitions include “Michael Dweck: The End, Montauk, N.Y.” (2003-10, New York, San Francisco, Tokyo); “Michael Dweck: Three” (2005, Tokyo), “Michael Dweck: Mermaids” (2008, Paris, Belgium, Hamburg, New York, Tokyo, Monaco); “Michael Dweck: Giant Polaroids” (2010, Belgium); “Michael Dweck: Habana Libre” (2011-12, San Francisco, Havana, New York, Toronto, Tokyo) becoming the first American living artist to have a solo museum exhibition in Cuba. Works by the artist are held in international art collections.

Previously, Dweck studied fine arts at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York and went on to become a highly regarded Creative Director, receiving more than 40 international awards, including the coveted Gold Lion at the Cannes International Festival in France. Two of his long-form television pieces are part of the permanent film collection of The Museum of Modern Art in New York. This is his third exhibition at Modernism.



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