

• FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE •

*Teeth and Consequence*

Dennis Cooper, M. Page Greene, Christopher Russell, sweaterqueens, Bobbi Woods

October 12 – November 10, 2018

Opening Reception: Friday, October 12th, 6 - 8 pm

Free and open to the public

*I give the name violence to a boldness lying idle and hankering for danger. It can be seen in a look, a walk, a smile, and it's in you that it stirs. It unnerves you. This violence is a calm that disturbs you. — Jean Genet*

*La violence* is a raw expression of humanity, directed by psychological cues that one scarcely understands, an emotion fraught with teeth and consequence. Genet's relationships were complicated, encompassing and destructive, yet within this minefield he possessed a profound self-awareness. *La violence* is the flawed humanity of the person, the sum total of compassion and arrogance, generosity and brutality, the capacity to elevate as well as devastate. This mess of emotion has everything to do with how and whom we accept into our lives. *La violence* stands against the childish simplicity of political platitudes that has come to populate suburban lawn signs and gallery walls. *La violence* is grounded in a reality of weakness, failing and personal profundity; it stands distinct from the kitsch notion of love.

Genet's intensity is especially difficult to understand against social media's encompassing world of empty symbolism. Language develops at such a rate that words enter wide usage only to disappear in a few years, if not months. This speed has defined the rate at which culture moves and evolves. Centuries-long struggles enter political discussion only to have their participants made into caricatures—piteous by the left and ridiculous by the right; not venerated for their humanity, but reduced to a slogan, a cause trimmed to fit an empty phrase, a cliché adorned in the patina of political resistance. That emptiness makes struggle and marginalization co-optable, absorbed into the disposable cycles of fashion. It's no accident that within a year of Donald Trump's election, after "love wins" became a national rallying cry, that Gucci began selling "Love is Blind" merchandise. Raf Simons and Fendi also introduced garish declarations of "Love" while Commes Des Garçons produced a line of heart emblazoned clothing. The movement for so-called safe spaces echoes this appropriation of agency, positing marginalized people as incapable of navigating a world that has, ironically, left them with much thicker skin than their self-appointed champions.

This exhibition considers Genet, Sartre's patron saint of existentialism, as a partial antidote to a polarized, yet increasingly hollow political awareness. When you make a decision, you make it for the entire world. This was Sartre's idea for a secularized ethic: embrace the golden rule while discarding the vast network of loopholes embedded within the gilded bureaucracy of religion. It proposed a path away from Postwar European depression, and might work to dissuade us of a peculiar fetishism that offers political pleasure by infantilizing the marginalized other while ignoring one's own violence.

*Teeth and Consequence* has been organized by Christopher Russell and Bobbi Woods.

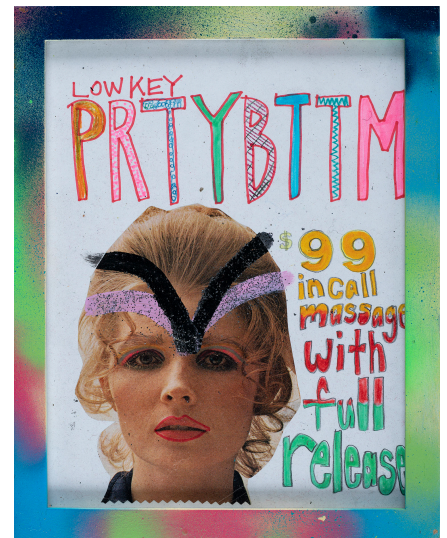


Image: sweaterqueens, *Untitled*, 2018, craft materials on paper in artist made frame, 12" x 9.5" (30.48 x 24.13cm).

### **About Dennis Cooper**

Poet, novelist, and short story writer Dennis Cooper was born in Pasadena, California. He grew up in Southern California and was educated at Pasadena City College and Pitzer College. Cooper's early influences include French avant-garde poetry and novels and the films of Robert Bresson. In his work, he engages the limits of the body, and of speech, in response to the pressure of desire. In a 2011 Paris Review interview with Ira Silverberg, Cooper stated, "I'm as interested by what sex can't give you as by what it can. I don't see lust as a dumbing-down process. Most people fear confusion, but I think confusion is the truth and I seek it out. ... My goal is to try to articulate what my characters wish to express during sex but can't and to depict the way language is compromised by sex, as realistically as I can." His poetry collections include *The Dream Police: Selected Poems 1969-1993* (1995) and *The Weaklings* (2008). He is the author of numerous books of prose, including the novels *Frisk* (1991, one of five novels making up the George Miles Cycle), *The Sluts* (2005), and *The Marbled Swarm* (2011); the short story collections *Wrong* (1992) and *Ugly Man* (2009); the nonfiction volumes *All Ears: Criticism, Essays, and Obituaries* (1999) and *Smothered in Hugs: Essays, Interviews, Feedback, and Obituaries* (2010); and the collaborative projects *Dennis: Story-Song* (2006, with Don Waters and various artists) and *Jerk/Through Their Tears* (2011, with Gisele Vienne, Peter Rehberg, and Jonathan Capdevielle). In 1976, Cooper founded *Little Caesar Magazine* and in 1978, *Little Caesar Press*. From 1979 to 1983, he served as director of programming for the *Beyond Baroque Literary Arts Center* in Venice Beach, California. He has served as the editor of the *Little House on the Bowery* series for Akashic Books. Cooper was the first American writer to be awarded France's Prix Sade. He lives in Los Angeles and Paris.

### **About M. Page Greene**

M. Page Greene is an artist living and working in Los Angeles. Their work exploring gender slippages has been exhibited at The New Museum (New York), The Hammer Museum (Los Angeles), Kunsthalle Schirn (Frankfurt), The Deste Foundation (Athens) and Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna). Solo exhibitions include Deitch Projects (New York), Stuart Shave/Modern Art (London) and Peres Projects (Los Angeles and Berlin). Their performance work has been hosted by Human Resources (Los Angeles), Los Angeles Nomadic Division, and Los Angeles Water School. Greene's work is in numerous private collections, most notably The Museum of Modern Art (New York), The Hammer Museum (Los Angeles) and The Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles).

### **About Christopher Russell**

"I'm interested in beauty as a lure, things that maybe have a more modernist association with beauty, but lure people into these darker, contemplative places." Christopher Russell is his own folklorist. His photographs and publications document ghost stories, animal fables, accounts of familial dissent, and tales of survival. In 2009, he produced a solo exhibition at the Hammer Museum (Los Angeles). He has also been featured in group exhibitions at the Tokyo Institute of Photography, The Norton Museum, White Columns, De Appel Arts Center, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, among others. Russell has published numerous critical articles and has received positive notices in the *Los Angeles Time*, *New York Times*, *Huffington Post*, *Artillery*, *Frieze*, and *ArtForum*. His publications include the novel *Sniper*, the 'zine *Bedwetter*, *Budget Decadence* (2nd Cannons Publications), *Pattern Book* (Insert Blanc Press), and *Landscape* (Kolapsomal Press)—which was included in Martin Parr's *The Photobook: A History Volume III* (Phaidon). His work is included in the collections of over thirty public institutions including the Brooklyn Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen, Rhode Island School of Design Museum, Hammer Museum, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography.

### **About sweaterqueens**

sweaterqueens' work is a correspondence between two friends. A back and forth about their lives, place in the world and histories. Honoring all the queens who came before, some here - some not. Simultaneously glorifying and taking it lightly. Sharing codes, secrets and inside information, the complete truths and the bold faced lies. The vague, the direct, careless and calculated. Working primarily in collage, the artists take on some of the darker issues around the seriousness of AIDS and its continuing impact, while offering up a smart ass response. Borrowing imagery directly from fag rags, club flyers and vintage porn, the material is both a documentation and a historical record of their own stories and those of their friends, mixing into something at once deeply personal but widely understood.

### **About Bobbi Woods**

Through appropriated imagery, video, and graphic arts, Bobbi Woods documents and reframe the popular idioms, brutal banalities, and nervous tensions between pleasure and hilarity, fear and desire. Woods was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1973. She earned a BFA and an MFA from the Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, in 2004 and 2008, and studied at Staedelschule, Frankfurt/Main, Germany. In 2015, Woods participated in The Manifest Destiny Billboard Project presented by LAND (Tucson, AZ), a screening of her video work at MOCA Tucson, as well as in a two-person exhibition with Brian Kennon at Fourteen30 Contemporary (Portland, OR.) Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, most recently at Pepin Moore, Los Angeles; Loudhailer Gallery, Los Angeles; Night Gallery, Los Angeles; Infernoesque, Berlin; Derek Eller, New York; Nathalie Karg Gallery, New York; White Columns, New York; David B. Smith, Denver; Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain, Nice, France. Her work is in private collections and institutions nationally and internationally. Woods is also the founder and director of Private Places, an independent exhibition and project gallery in Portland, Oregon. Bobbi Woods currently lives and works in Portland, Oregon.

### **About David B. Smith Gallery**

David B. Smith Gallery is committed to presenting intelligent and culturally relevant exhibitions in its Denver location, featuring the region's most important emerging talent alongside internationally recognized artists. Through its curatorial program, participation in art fairs, and extensive media coverage in publications such as *Art in America* and *ARTnews*, David B. Smith Gallery has cultivated a strong national and international audience. *The New York Times* hailed the gallery as offering "an exciting contrast of cutting edge works" and *The Denver Post* declared that it is "the premier commercial space" in Denver. The gallery also maintains an active publishing division, which produces exhibition catalogues and editions.