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3852 North Miami Avenue, Miami, FL 33127
305.576.8570 | info@locustprojects.org | www.locustprojects.org

DRAFT RELEASE:

Locust Projects presents
Trenton Doyle Hancock
*I Made a Mound City in
Miami Dade County*

Exhibition Dates:
November 17, 2019-
February 8, 2020

Public Opening Event:
Sunday, November 17
1-3pm

Related Programs:
Miami Art Week Reception
Tuesday, December 3, 7-
9pm

Art Basel VIP Studio Visits
Thursday, December 5,
9-11am

Public Hours:
Tuesday to Saturday
11am – 5pm



Mound # 1, The Legend and the Exposed Nerve (Detail), 2019

The heroic adventures of Torpedo Boy and his battles in the Moundverse continue at Locust Projects this fall with a new site-specific installation by Houston-based artist Trenton Doyle Hancock. This is Hancock's first large scale solo exhibition since opening his major survey, *Mind of the Mound: Critical Mass*, at MASS MoCA in March 2019. The exhibition will open with a public opening on Sunday, November 17 from 1-3pm.

Hancock tells the story of the Mounds (gentle hybrid plant-like creatures) protected by Torpedo Boy, and their enemies, the Vegans (mutants who consume tofu and spill Mound blood every chance they get). These narratives--told through paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints, video and installation--explore good and evil, authority, race, class, moral relativism, politics and religion, as well as making unapologetic nods to comic books, illustrations, animations, horror films, and toys.

"Hancock's Moundverse is an epic and fantastical creation myth he started at age 10 with the creation of Torpedo Boy, a well-intentioned, deeply flawed, alter-ego super hero who attempts to save kind and gentle Mounds from evil Vegans.

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While his storytelling follows the classic comic book character trajectory of conflict, struggle and overcoming, Hancock also reflects poignantly on our humanity and trying to make sense of the wrong's in the world."

Visitors enter the exhibition through Locust's Storefront, which the artist has designed to mimic a commercial toy store displaying shelves of the artist's custom-designed Moundverse Infants. The dolls, depicting various characters from Hancock's epic narrative, are "infant" incarnations of Torpedo Boy, Udom Endgle, Bring Back, and Soul. Riffing on the tropes of classic toy design with large logos and slick, candy-colored packaging shout: "While inside the Mind of the Mound, anything is possible! It's up to you to plan new adventures to add to the ever evolving story of the Moundverse Infants." Visitors can purchase a doll to take home a piece of the exhibition and create their own continuing story with Moundverse personas.

From the Storefront, visitors follow the colorful, hand-painted floor design that mirrors the linoleum quatrefoil tile on the artist's grandmother's floor into the Main Gallery. The pattern is found in many of Hancock's works as a frame or foundation that provides structure to the artist's characters and stories. The familial reference ties the fantastical nature of the Moundverse with the artist's real-life history and upbringing, a memory from childhood of sitting on the floor and drawing while seeking to impress family and gain acceptance.

Once in the Main Gallery, visitors are greeted with wall designs that shout out the exhibition's title in bold letters. Always at play, Hancock arrived at his title, *I Made a Mound City* by re-arranging of the letters in Miami Dade County. The focal point, is a massive, ceiling-height sculpture of The Legend, Mound #1. Visitors can enter the structure through its fabric pelt-like cape entrance to view *The Color Crop Experience*, an animation of the artist encountering The Legend in the forest. The exhibition also features early hand-drawn pages from Trenton's forthcoming 400-page graphic novel, *The Moundverse*, videos and animations, and a pop-up comic book store in the Project Room.

"As Miami's longest running alternative space, Locust is excited to welcome such an established artist like Trenton to take over our space and have the opportunity to experiment and play both with the trajectory of his ever-evolving Moundverse and his own narrative as an artist," says Lorie Mertes, executive director. "I Made a Mound City in Miami Dade County is an origin story of sorts, giving visitors a glimpse into Torpedo Boy's earliest encounters with The Legend, Mound #1 and his ensuing adventures while also fast-forwarding us towards the inevitable fate of the modern superhero—the commodification of his story and the Moundverse characters, now dolls, for sale in the toy store."



Top: Trenton Doyle Hancock, *Mind of the Mound: Critical Mass*, at Mass Moca, North Adams. Photo: Tony Luong.

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ABOUT TRENTON DOYLE HANCOCK

Born in 1974 in Oklahoma City, OK and raised in Paris, Texas, Hancock earned his BFA from Texas A&M University, Commerce, and his MFA from the Tyler School of Art at Temple University, Philadelphia. He was featured in the 2000 and 2002 Whitney Biennial exhibitions, at the time becoming one of the youngest artists in history to participate in the prestigious survey. In 2014, his exhibition, *Skin & Bones: 20 Years of Drawing*, at the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston traveled to Akron Art Museum, OH; Studio Museum in Harlem, NY; and Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, VA. In March 2019, a major exhibition of his work, *Mind of the Mound: Critical Mass*, opened at MASS MoCA, North Adams, MA. He currently lives in Houston, TX.

Photo: The artist with, *Mound #1* and *The Color Crop Experience*, 2019, installation view; Trenton Doyle Hancock, *Mind of the Mound: Critical Mass*, at Mass Moca, North Adams. Photo: Tony Luong.

ABOUT LOCUST PROJECTS

Founded by artists for artists in 1998, Locust Projects is Miami's longest running nonprofit alternative art space. We produce, present, and nurture ambitious and experimental new art and the exchange of ideas through commissioned exhibitions and projects, artist residencies, summer art intensives for teens, and public programs on contemporary art and curatorial practice. As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, Locust Projects emphasizes boundary-pushing creative endeavors, risk-taking and experimentation by local, national and international artists. We invest in South Florida's arts community by providing artists with project grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub and access to pro bono legal services.

Trenton Doyle Hancock: *I Made a Mound City in Miami Dade County* is made possible, in part, through generous support from the 21st Anniversary Benefit Donor Fund. Major Sponsors include: Craig Robins, Cara and Robert Balogh, Irma and Norman Braman, James Cohan Gallery, Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz, Vivian Pfeiffer, Chairman, Phillips, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; Supporting Sponsors: Jorge Garcia and Angel Perez, George Lindemann, Podhurst Orseck PA, Debra and Dennis Scholl. Additional support for the exhibition has been provided by Funding Arts Network and Gander & White.

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