



Cathouse FUNeral in Cathouse Proper: Life to Art to Life

Fifth Year Anniversary Exhibition!
opens Saturday, April 27, 6-9PM
extended to June 16, 2019

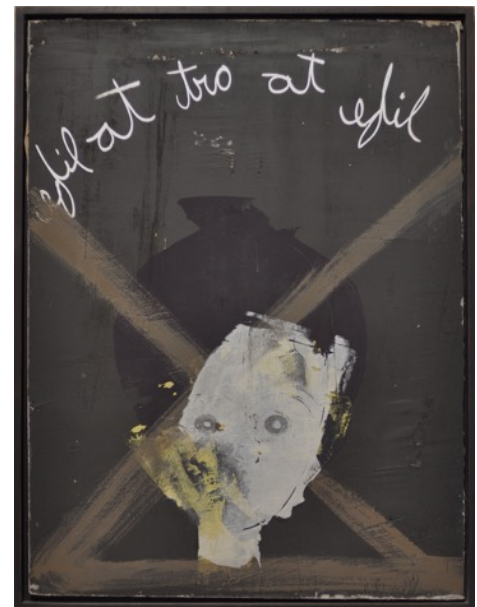
Cathouse celebrates five years in operation by installing its original Cathouse FUNeral in its current Cathouse Proper.

Considering that any single group exhibition attempting to encapsulate all of Cathouse's past activities could only be partial, *Cathouse FUNeral in Cathouse Proper: Life to Art to Life*, as an anniversary celebration, hangs two newly constructed, nine by seven foot, plaster fresco paintings of the original Cathouse FUNeral logo opposite each other in Cathouse Proper's main space. These monumental icons signify, embrace, and mirror the gallery project itself and all its activities, and are composed of building materials and media that have become the hallmark of the original Cathouse FUNeral begun in 2013, along with its subsequent "harvestings" (works cut from the gallery walls). The generative dialectic that has framed the gallery project since its inception has been "Youthful Narcissism / Heroic Social Work," the spirit of which is present in this reflexive display of gallery within gallery by the artistic and curatorial ego of Cathouse founding director, David Dixon.

A sculpture made by Dixon in 2008 titled *The Artist in his Studio* (composed of a hyperrealistic silicone cast of the artist's head, dead, and balanced atop a stack of art studio buckets) chronologically begins the exhibition while also marking the beginning of the end for the Youthful Narcissist, the end of which allows for the collaborative project (Heroic Social Work) that becomes Cathouse FUNeral / Proper.

Salvation and escape from fearful solipsism can be found in the appropriated black wall surfaces that were removed, shaped, and repurposed from artist Tariku Shiferaw's March 2018 exhibition at Cathouse Proper, *This Ain't Safe*, and worked on by Dixon expressionistically with silkscreen, paint, and pen thereby demonstrating that there is an outside (other artists' work) even within the program (of the self). These mid-sized framed works fill the anterior rooms leading into the larger main space, counterpoising allusions to the Greek myth of Narcissus (silkscreened details of Dixon's head from *The Artist in his Studio*—reflected, baptized and submerged) with representations of a traditional reliquary guardian figure from the Kota of central west Africa, as seen in the FUNeral logo.

Haunting, meditative, and packed, *Cathouse FUNeral in Cathouse Proper: Life to Art to Life* fronts the performative nature of our cultural moments ongoing, eternal return of white-space art exhibitions as ritualized exercises in the exchange of self, other, community, commerce, purpose, death, and aesthetic discourse as a form of self-absolution.

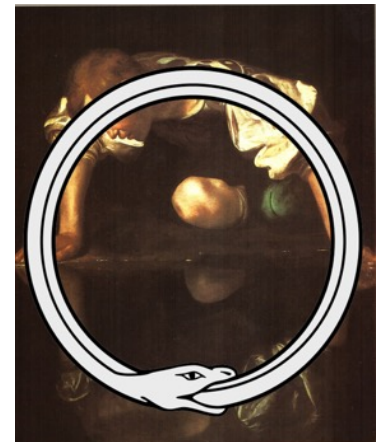




Cathouse history: Cathouse FUNeral opened its first show in November 2013, carved out from the viewing rooms of a former funeral home in East Williamsburg. The gallery was built from scratch by its founding director, David Dixon, and thereafter never really stopped being built, i.e., the space that began as a traditional white cube was never returned to its original white walls. Rather, the gallery was altered to fit the needs of each exhibition while also maintaining elements of design from earlier shows in the current ones. The gallery

became a collage, or temporal montage, as layers of walls were built over walls to preserve artists' murals, frescos, painting, et cetera. Consequently, the gallery itself took on material, sculptural form--the joke was always, "What are you going to do when the space is only three by three feet wide?"

This endgame, however, was never reached. The ex-funeral home building was sold in 2016 and operations were moved to 524 Project Space in Carroll Gardens where it was re-christened "Cathouse *Proper*" in light of this new space's especially well-appointed design. But before leaving the original FUNeral building, all the walls, including studs, were removed then reused and reconfigured for four distinct, itinerant, off-site group exhibitions in Bushwick, Chelsea, Lower East Side, and Beacon, NY. This instinct for preservation and transformation began early in the FUNeral program when, during deinstallation of the third show, the first of many "harvestings" (an architectural detail that is recognized, appropriated and preserved as a self-contained relic of the exhibition and its process) was produced.



It was while installing *Leaving Home: Cathouse FUNeral Migrates North* in Beacon that participating artist Davide Cantoni mirthfully quipped, "Oh, I get it, this is a solo-show with lots of other artists in it!", exposing fault lines in curatorial practice and notions of authorship that Cathouse FUNeral / Proper has often probed. Nevertheless, to date, at the end of our fifth year, Cathouse has produced thirty-seven solo and group exhibitions, as well as twenty-eight events, with well over one hundred artists shown. Thank you to you all for all, no doubt this has been an inspired and inspiring five years!

Cathouse Proper @ 524 Projects
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Friday - Sunday, 12-6PM