

# Morgan Presents



## Janus

Ana Benaroya  
Jean-Baptiste Bernadet  
Coady Brown  
Sam Jablon  
Yowshien Kuo  
Tony Matelli

Rebecca Ness  
Walter Robinson  
Paul Anthony Smith  
Kathia St. Hilaire  
Willie Stewart  
Chloe West

June 30th—July 27th, 2022

155 Suffolk St.

Opening reception: June 30th, 5—8pm

The ancient Roman god Janus embodied beginnings and endings, transitions and time, as well as doorways and passages. Depicted with two faces, one looking towards the future and one back to the past, Janus represented a middle ground between concrete and abstract dualities such as life and death, creation and destruction.

The exhibition will explore these dualities, while allowing for the possibility of the in-between; namely that creative expression can occupy a liminal space, a threshold that denies categorization as solely one or the other. Through this lens, the surface, or face of a painting may simultaneously reveal and obscure biography, intention and meaning. *Janus* asserts that we can recognize change, evolution and growth, as not a static jump from one state to another, but rather experienced through a daily continuity.

This idea of societal change is echoed by the disappearance and reappearance of the oscillating words in Nauman's neon work. Flashing in bright color, and then just as quickly disappearing, are the alternating words Read and Reap. The rhythmic absence of each alternating word leads us to seek a further legibility in its withdrawal. The differentiation of each word by only one letter also presents a confounding search for meaning—particularly when presented in this overlapping geometric pattern of an X.

Flashing and flickering is inherent to the nature of the neon medium, simultaneously evoking the mom & pop stores of rural America, as well as the commercial swaggering of city centers. Shultis' work shares a fascination with Americana; particularly in reference to the power of images, symbols and languages in a commoditized, capitalist culture dominated by advertisements and commerce.

Each one of these works examines both historical and contemporary ingredients to social upheaval and change, yet they leave ambiguous whether our moment is one preceding or following such a great societal shift. The only thing we can know for certain is, that our times are certainly *a-changin'*.

**Mike Shultis** (b. 1987, Albuquerque, NM) lives and works in Albuquerque, NM. He received an MFA in Painting and Printmaking from Yale School of Art and a BFA in Painting from Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. He has had solo exhibitions at Ashes/Ashes, New York City; PM/AM, London; Diane Rosenstein, Los Angeles; and a two-person exhibition at Thierry Goldberg Gallery, New York City. His work has been included in group exhibitions at: Carl Kostyál, Stockholm and Malmö, Sweden; The Bronx Museum of the Arts; and Rizzuto Gallery, Palermo, Italy.

**Bruce Nauman** (b. 1941, New York City, NY) is widely recognised as one of the most influential living American artists and a pioneer of conceptual and performance art. Surveys and retrospectives include: Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art (1972-73); The Walker Art Center and the Hirshhorn Museum, which opened at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, and travelled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; and Kunsthaus Zurich (1993-95); a commission for Tate Modern's Turbine Hall (2004). Nauman represented the United States at the 2009 Venice Biennale—the pavilion was awarded the Golden Lion for Best National Participation.

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**Morgan Presents** is a New York exhibition space founded and directed by Morgan Aguiar-Lucander, an independent curator, writer, dealer, and advisor to both artists and collectors.

Morgan Presents invites pairs of artists to create an exhibition that offers a new perspective into their practice. Morgan Presents is not a representing gallery, and no one artist will exhibit twice during the run of the program. Morgan Presents intends to offer an insight into today's emerging vanguard of painting and sculpture in collaboration and dialogue with established artists and galleries both domestically and abroad. A hardback publication, cataloguing each exhibition, will be published at the conclusion of the project. The curatorial program will be presented out of 155 Suffolk Street in Manhattan, commencing from September 2021.

For press inquiries please contact Alan Gutierrez at [alan@morgan-presents.com](mailto:alan@morgan-presents.com)  
Image: Mike Shultis, *La Di Da*, 2022, mixed media on panel, 73 x 90 inches