

## ARTIST COBY KENNEDY TURNS CONFLICT INTO ART AT SUPERCHIEF GALLERY

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"The Coming Of The Thuggernaut," Coby Kennedy. Photo: Superchief Gallery.

Multidisciplinary artist Coby Kennedy's new show "Jimmy Crow and the Imaginary Thug" envisions the future to contend with America's past. The exhibition, which opened Feb. 25 and runs through March 21, marks the artist's second solo show at New York's Superchief Gallery.

The installation brings to life the characters referenced in the exhibition's name, manifesting them as a "weaponized biological slur," dubbed the Thuggernaut, and a "golem entity" referred to as Jimmy Crow. The gallery described the exhibition as centering on an Afrofuturism narrative "born from America's dark history of racial conflict and set in a near future world directly reflecting today's mass media and propaganda."



"Borough Nationalist Mandala 2," Coby Kennedy. Photo: Superchief Gallery.

"These archetypes exist in the artist's larger body of work titled 'In the Service of A Villian,'" organizers said in a statement. "The narrative explores intra-racial colorism through a vast civil war between light and dark skin Black people set in what's come to be known as 'The Kingdom of Brooklyn.' Observing the power of contemporary advertising and entertainment, the artist imagines how a culture, raised solely on today's highly problematic mass media, would inevitably build their society in the future."

In paintings, Kennedy embodies themes of conflict and protection through his use of Kevlar as canvas, morphing bulletproof ballistic grade materials into sites for art. Moving off the walls and into the exhibition space, the artist pulls pieces of the Thuggernaut's exoskeleton into the middle of the gallery. Online, a listing for a sculptural piece titled "Partial Skin of the Thuggernaut 2" notes the materials used to create the artwork as "steel, plastic [and] the souls of thugg-folk."

Of the artist's imagined worlds and the placement of its relics, the gallery stated that "Kennedy creates artwork that gives the viewer the sense that they are studying relics from a parallel world, as if this was an exhibition within an alternative reality's Metropolitan Museum."

Kennedy, who currently lives and works in New York City, is featured in an upcoming episode of the ALL ARTS series "Flowstate /North Brooklyn Artists" that is set to debut March 15.

<https://allarts.org/2021/02/coby-kennedy-superchief-gallery/>