

## **Another Man's Treasure: Chris Collins and George Herms**

November 10 – December 23, 2020

Los Angeles, CA. Louis Stern Fine Arts is pleased to present *Another Man's Treasure: Chris Collins and George Herms*. This selection of works by sculptor Chris Collins and assemblage artist George Herms is unified by the LA-based artists' shared attraction to overlooked objects and materials which might be commonly disregarded as "trash." Collins and Herms collect and reassemble humble cultural cast-offs with magpie-like discernment, granting them second life as poignant gems that sparkle with humor, intrigue, and surprise.

With more than a decade's experience working as a foundry artisan, Collins employs his skills in metal work to transmute detritus into cultural artifacts with uncommon presence. Applied gold leaf glows from the interior of a discarded USMC gas can, at one time used for target practice and ragged with bullet holes, suggesting a sacrificial offering or a sacred vessel. The patched remains of television flatscreens scavenged from the New Mexico desert dazzle with disco ball brilliance, and a disused cell phone and shattered car mirror are fused to bronze plates with all the gravitas of a religious icon. Within the context of our modern cycle of creation, consumption, and discard, Collins' work considers the legacy of objects and the question of their value.

Widely celebrated as a founder of West Coast assemblage art, Herms has been creating artwork with found objects since the 1950s. His playful assemblages read like visual free verse poems, which lead the open mind to unexpected associations and delight with good-natured, cheeky warmth. "Temporary No King" dolls up a stern parking enforcement admonition in girlish pink velvet and denim. "Valuable Dung" features a newspaper report on the imperiled droppings of an extinct giant sloth; the absurd tale is lovingly enclosed in a ring of chicken wire and upholstery, like a name feverishly circled in a diary. Infused with wit and rebellious sprit, the influence of Herms' Beat poet compatriots and his love of jazz are undeniable in these joyous, improvisational works.

Work by Alabama-born Chris Collins has been exhibited across the American South and Southwest. From 2014 – 2017 he co-operated the art gallery and exhibition space Santa Fe Collective. Previously a contributing faculty member at the Santa Fe University of Art and Design, Collins currently teaches metal casting at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo, CA. In addition to an extensive gallery exhibition history, George Herms has been awarded three National Endowment for the Arts fellowships (1968, 1977 and 1984), the Prix de Rome Fellowship in Sculpture from Rome's American Academy (1983-84), a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship in Sculpture (also 1983-84), the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation Award (1998) and a Fellowship at the Getty Research Institute (2000).