



Ben Murray  
*Centerville*

# **Ben Murray**

## ***Centerville***

5 April – 31 May 2014

This publication was created on the occasion of Ben Murray's solo exhibition at moniquemeloche

moniquemeloche

© 2015

Ben Murray's atmospheric images depict banal objects as transformed by the effects of memory, mood and painterly improvisation. For his first solo exhibition at moniquemeloche, Murray presents recent, large-scale oil paintings posing as vernacular symbols of experience from the artist's suburban Indiana hometown, the land formerly known as *Centerville*.

This centrally located town has a complicated history. Claimed as Wiggins Point in 1835 when Jeremiah Wiggins came upon a clearing of land along the Sauk Trail by the Potawatomie Indians, it was renamed Centerville after only three years - when Jeremiah died and because of its central location in the east-west trade route. Forty-seven years later, in 1885, when the first Post Office was established in the area and because another Centerville, Indiana previously existed, the land's name had to change once again. It was briefly Merrillville and finally Merrillville after the brothers Dudley and William Merrill, who were some of the earliest settlers. Merrillville officially became a town in 1971 and a major destination point for the white flight from Gary, Indiana for the following two decades - the time of Murray's youth.

The paintings display the layering of attempts to claim images in stages of constant flux. With his time living in Indiana informing the work, Murray proposes to insert himself as an active member in the dialogue of the town's erratic timeline informed by his own personal history. Placing the memory-derived work in the context of this historical setting, the artist intends to acknowledge the complicated relationships that image-making within painting has and can have for how we see and edit the past.

**Ben Murray (American b. 1977, lives Chicago)** received his MFA from the University of Illinois, Chicago in 2013 and his BFA from the Herron School of Art, Indianapolis in 2011. He was a 2014 Artist In Residence at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Art in Omaha, Nebraska and a 2012 MFA Resident at Ox-Bow in Saugatuck, Michigan. He has recently exhibited at Northwestern University, Kaplan A.I.R Exhibitions, curated by John Neff; UIC Gallery 400, and "Revisiting Undomesticated" at Design Cloud, Chicago.



Installation view



Installation view



*Corner*, 2014  
Oil on canvas  
72 x 69 inches



*Fluorescence*, 2014  
Oil on canvas  
69 x 84 inches



*Backseat*, 2013  
Oil on canvas  
79 x 102 inches





*Bed, 2014*  
Oil on canvas  
72 x 84 inches



*Hoop*, 2013  
Oil on canvas  
72 x 93 inches



*Drain, 2014*  
Oil on canvas  
20 x 24 inches



*Drain, 2014*  
Oil on canvas  
18 x 22 inches



*Alarm*, 2013  
Oil on canvas  
24 x 20 inches



*Ashtray*, 2013  
Ink wash on paper  
22 x 30 inches



*Barstool*, 2013  
Ink wash on paper  
30 x 22 inches

# BEN MURRAY

American, born 1977 Merrillville, IN, lives Chicago, IL

## Education

- 2013 MFA University of Illinois at Chicago, IL
- 2011 BFA Herron School of Art and Design, Indianapolis, IN
- 2003 Pont-Aven School of Contemporary Art, Brittany, France
- 2000 AA American Academy of Art, Chicago, IL

## Solo Exhibitions

- 2014 *Centerville*, Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago, IL
- 2006 *A Moot Documentary*, Flux Space, Indianapolis, IN

## Group Exhibitions

- 2015 *New American Paintings: Midwest Edition*, Elmhurst Art Museum, Elmhurst, IL
- 2014 *Ground Floor*, Chicago emerging artists biennial, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL
- 2013 *Recent Paintings*, Kaplan A.I.R. Exhibitions, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL  
Curated by John Neff  
*Revisiting Undomesticated*, Design Cloud, Chicago, IL  
*A strange house in my voice*, MFA Thesis Exhibition, Gallery 400, University of Illinois, Chicago, IL  
*Winter Group Exhibition: No-Show*, West Pilsen Sculpture Garden, Chicago, IL
- 2012 *MDW Fair*, UIC MFA Booth, Chicago, IL
- 2010 *Bootleg Vol. 2*, Bootleg Gallery, Indianapolis, IN  
*Friends of Chautauqua*, Arizona State University Gallery, Phoenix, AZ
- 2009 *Bootleg Vol. 1*, Bootleg Gallery, Indianapolis, IN
- 2007 *Flux Closing*, Flux Space, Indianapolis, IN
- 2006 *Interchange (Collaborative Project Show)*, Indianapolis, IN  
*Surface Communication*, Madison Gallery, Indianapolis, IN  
*Resurgence*, Madison Gallery, Indianapolis, IN  
*Group Show (Donor Event)*, Eskenazi Hall, Indianapolis, IN
- 2005 *Janus Ball (Charity Auction)*, Indiana Rooftop Ballroom, Indianapolis, IN  
*Is, Was, Will Be*, Mona Bismarck Foundation, Paris, FR  
*Is, Was, Will Be*, Espace Melanie, Riec-sur-Belon, FR

## Residencies, Fellowships, Grants and Awards

- 2014 Artist in Residence - Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts - Omaha, NE, USA
- 2012 MFA Artist in Residence - Ox-Bow - Saugatuck, MI, USA
- 2012 Dedalus Award Nominee - University of Illinois at Chicago
- 2012 Dean's Scholar Nominee - University of Illinois at Chicago
- 2011 Board of Trustees Waiver - University of Illinois at Chicago
- 2004 Best of Show - Senior Exhibition – Herron School of Art
- 2003 Rev. A. G. Fraser International Travel Award – Herron School of Art
- 2002 Joseph Vansickle Scholarship – Herron School of Art

## Selected Bibliography

- 2015 "Ten reasons to get excited about the winter art season", The Chicago Tribune, January 2014  
"Review: Ben Murray @ Monique Meloche", *Newcity*, May 15.  
*New American Paintings, No. 113 Midwestern Issue*, curated by Staci Boris, Chief Curator  
Elmhurst Art Museum, Elmhurst, IL
- 2013 "Ben Murray (Featured Artist)", *MakeSpace.net*, May.  
"Stories From the Inside - an Interview with MFA student Ben Murray", *Gallery 400 blog*, March.
- 2012 "Smallness and Sameness at Chicago's MDW Fair", *Art Fag City*, November.
- 2009 "George Benedict Murray III", *Conduit Chicago*, September.
- 2006 "A Moot Documentary", *OntheCusp.org*, February.

### **Related Employment**

- 2013-14 Teacher Artist, Patrick Henry Elementary, George Washington High School, CAPE, Chicago, IL
- 2013 Adjunct Assistant Professor, Summer Bridge Program, University of Illinois at Chicago, IL
- 2012-13 Instructor of Record, Drawing I, the Beginning, University of Illinois at Chicago, IL
- 2012 Graduate Assistant (Studio/Sculpture Shop Technician Assistant & Art Education Assistant @Spiral Workshop) University of Illinois at Chicago, IL
- 2012 Teaching Assistant (Assistant Professor Dianna Frid), Topics in Drawing I & Advanced Topics in Drawing, University of Illinois at Chicago, IL
- 2011-12 Senior Preparator, Gallery 400, University of Illinois at Chicago, IL
- 2007-11 Preparator/ Storage Collections Assistant, Icon Group, Chicago, IL
- 2006-07 Freelance Preparator, New York, NY
- 2005, 07 Sol LeWitt Wall Painting Draftsman, Indianapolis, IN, New York, NY
- 2005 Teacher Artist, VSA Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN
- 2004-05 Instructor / Coordinator, Herron School of Art (Saturday School/Honors Art), Indianapolis, IN

### **Other Experience**

- 2014 Presenter, *Art Talk*, Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Omaha, NE
- 2013 Presenter, *Conversation with Ben Murray and John Neff*, Kaplan A.I.R. Exhibitions @ NWU, Evanston, IL
- 2013 Presenter, *A stranger house in my voice.*, University of Illinois at Chicago, IL
- 2012 Presenter, *Mutual Interpretations*, University of Illinois at Chicago, IL

**moniquemeloche** was founded in October 2000 with an inaugural exhibition titled *Homewrecker* at Meloche's home, and officially opened to the public in May 2001. Working with an international group of emerging artists in all media, the gallery presents conceptually challenging installations in Chicago and at art fairs internationally with an emphasis on curatorial and institutional outreach.

**moniquemeloche**

2154 W. Division, Chicago, IL 60622  
p 773.252.0299 [www.moniquemeloche.com](http://www.moniquemeloche.com)